

**'Mimetic Effect in Mentoring Baptist Ministers'**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
of the award of Doctor of Coaching and Mentoring.

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## **Abstract**

This study seeks to explain mimetic effect in mentoring: how mentor values, attitudes and behaviour are reproduced in mentees in the context of Baptist ministers. In a challenging environment for UK churches, mentoring is regarded as one way of enabling ministers to develop appropriate qualities. There is a gap, however, in the existing literature of ministerial formation and mentoring studies concerning how desirable qualities in a mentor are reproduced in a mentee. This case study of mentoring among ministers in a network of Baptist churches explores how mentor qualities are reproduced in a mentee.

A review of the literature relating to modelling and mimetic effect was carried out across mentoring, ministerial formation within practical theology, and social learning aspects in leadership and exemplarity studies.

A mixed methods case study has been used within a critical realist paradigm to identify and build explanation of mimetic effect. The implications of being an insider-researcher with shared faith and calling are discussed. The case-study comprised a quantitative survey to identify mimetic effect and to enable selection of five mentees and their mentors for qualitative semi-structured interviews. There were thirteen interviews including three with independent mentor-practitioners. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistical tools. Interview data was analysed thematically and organised with the help of Quirkos.

Analysis of the survey indicated the presence of mimetic effect and associated variables. Mimetic effect was identified in the qualitative interviews. The Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring was developed from findings of six synergistic generative conditions and two motivational drivers. Mentor-mentee prioritising of responsiveness to God was found to be a particularly significant factor in the generative mechanism of mimetic effect. Further research could test and develop this model in other contexts, in particular by examining the presence or absence of transcendence factors.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am deeply grateful for the encouragement, participation and practical support of the following without whom this study would not have been possible.

- My supervisors, Dr Elaine Cox, who has been a calm and wise support throughout the DCaM process together with Dr Judie Gannon, offering complementary styles and feedback.
- My peers on the DCaM course whose companionship has been stimulating and encouraging.
- The trustees of Southern Counties Baptist Association for permission to undertake these studies and, together with them, my SCBA team members who have so kindly and prayerfully released me to pursue this extra 'calling' and providential opportunity.
- The trustees of West of England Baptist Association for giving permission to conduct a survey with their ministers and to all the WEBA and SCBA ministers who responded to the questionnaire.
- All of the mentees, mentors and mentoring practitioners who gave up their time to be interviewed and in so-doing provided inspiration along with data!
- My grown-up family, Tim, Lucy, Emily and her husband Dan, who in various ways have given encouragement and practical support.
- Most of all, my wife, Alison, who kept on believing that I could get there and helped me to do the same, made sacrifices in order to help me do so, and whose love and encouragement along the way are beyond description.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

The problem this study seeks to address relates to the dynamics of mimetic effect<sup>1</sup> in mentoring Baptist ministers. This is a new area, with the possibility of fresh explanations which can lead to useful research and practical insights beyond Baptist groupings and other Christian faith communities.

### 1.1 Motivation for the study

My interest in 'mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers' originates in a long-standing fascination with how individuals develop as people and as leaders. As a Baptist minister I am called to help others to respond to their divine vocation to become fully who they can humanly be. I am also invited and called to respond to the invitation to grow into my God-called shape. This is an integral concern in the classical understanding of a pastor (Colwell, 2005). A pastor's calling is to play a strategic role in the growth and formation of others into individual and corporate, Christ-like, maturity (Holy Bible, 1995, Ephesians 4.11-16). My own journey as a pastor since 1990 has included personal development and specialist experience as a counsellor and counselling-trainer, a mentor and as a spiritual director. The focus of this work has often been with ministers and has ensured continuing participation and interest in the dynamics of formation. My current role includes overseeing the provision of mentoring and the equipping of mentors to work with newly accredited Baptist ministers. It also includes putting more experienced ministers in touch with a mentor as part of their developmental support.

As part of my role as a mentoring practitioner and trainer it is important for me to have a personal understanding about the role of a mentor. My working definition of mentoring in the context of my role is 'an intentional relationship focusing on the practical development of a person's God-given desires and potential.' I define a mentor as 'an example and skilled companion who intentionally supports a mentee in their pursuit of God-given desires and potential.' The use of the word 'example' in this definition of a mentor is a deliberate reference to the likelihood of some positive modelling and imitative effect in the reproducing of attitudes, priorities and behaviour from a mentor to a mentee. It was René Girard's (2001) mimetic theory of human imitation as a mechanism rooted in

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<sup>1</sup> Mimetic effect is the reproducing of another's attitudes, values and behaviour. See further discussion below under 'Defining mimetic effect.'

desiring what others desire which triggered interest in identifying and exploring the process of mimetic effect as an aspect of mentoring.

My working definitions of 'mentoring' and 'mentor' represent 30 years' experience concerning the distinctive, shared broad intention and process of a mentoring dyad comprising but not limited to Christians. Theological, spiritual, and psychological reflection on this process has drawn on pastoral, counselling and spiritual-direction practice and literature. They are definitions that are deliberately drawn so as to apply to both apprentice-type and developmental approaches, to be extendable to peer mentoring, and to emphasise the (mutual) influence of exemplarity. In a dyad where a member claims no faith in God, the desires and potential may be understood as simply human; that they are God-given can, however, still be a working assumption on the part of the other dyad member who views human giftedness, uniqueness and fulfilment of potential through a theological lens. I have been in mentoring-type dyads where my faith is not shared by the other member, both as a mentee and as a mentor, and in each experience my assumption was that the desires and potential that were being pursued and supported were God-given. My investment in this study is as a person with Christian faith, called to be a minister among Baptist congregations and their communities, and with a particular role in helping other ministers sustain and develop their calling.

A further reason for seeking to explore mimetic dynamics is to contribute to the development of mentoring among Baptist ministers in a challenging 'faith' and 'mission' landscape (BUGB, 2015) in which Christian ministry is changing. In the UK churches and the mission in which they are engaged face many challenges both from the communities that they serve and within congregations (Searle, 2015). The sort of ministry with hierarchical assumptions which focused on serving established, settled, minister-focused congregations has been found wanting (Searle, 2015). Contemporary ministerial leadership is much more about attitudes, the ability to theologically reflect (Holmes, 2015), and ways of engaging and responding rather than simply repeatedly fulfilling certain tasks and rituals. This is compounded by a rise in the number of flexible models of ministry including bi and tri-vocational, either through choice or for reason of limited opportunities to receive a full stipend (BUGB, 2015).

The Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) scheme for mentoring new Baptist ministers has some challenging aspects. Geographical distance from and infrequent meetings between mentors and Newly Accredited Ministers (NAMS) mean that the mentoring approach is distal (Washington, 2012) and offline. The core task of mentors is to facilitate

learning and reflection on the journal reflections of critical ministry incidents for NAMS. Mentors are encountered primarily as facilitators of mentoring sessions rather than as models observed in regular ministry (BUGB Ministries Team, 2013). The scheme for mentoring NAMS majors on the reflective learning commonly found in professional supervision as described by Huizing (2010). This aspect of NAM mentoring includes the electronic provision by the mentee-minister of journal reflections as the basis of dyad sessions and summary reports of ministry areas covered by the volunteer mentor to the BUGB Ministries Team and his/her Association Regional Ministry Team (BUGB Ministries Team, 2013; BUGB Ministries Team, 2015).

The development of Baptist ministers shares with other organisations a basic assumption that mentoring leads to personal and professional development (Eby, 2007). Those on the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) Register of Nationally Accredited Ministers must demonstrate evidence of competency in doing and being. Ministerial competency and calling are expressed in tasks like community leadership, worship enabling and pastoral care and in living a life of discipleship and witness consistent with Christian faith and belief (Goodliff, 2012). The contribution of mentoring to new ministers is not simply about passing on 'career' skills or knowledge, nor only offering personal 'psychosocial' support in the midst of the challenges. It also involves enabling the mentee to develop attitudes and approaches to opportunities and challenges that arise (Green, 2012). Some of these attitudes and approaches will be formed in ministers through a mimetic process within mentoring where qualities observed and experienced in mentors are reproduced in their mentees.

## 1.2 Defining 'mimetic effect'

I am defining *mimetic effect* as the reproducing of identifiable attitudes, values and behaviour between mentor and mentee. This definition follows a process of sifting key terms and concepts. The term *mimetic* is chosen in preference to 'imitative' to avoid the idea of conscious or copycat reproducing of another's attitudes and behaviour. The process of the literature review has sharpened the focus of the research which originally referred to emulation, imitation and modelling in the title. These continue to be keywords. The words emulation and imitation, however, overlap such that technical distinctions relating to means and ends have been proposed for these two concepts (Warnick, 2008). On this proposal, *imitation* involves a new action that reproduces the action of a model both in means and end, *emulation* achieves the same end as a model but by different means, while *mimicry* replicates the means but not the end (Warnick,

2008, p.6). Warnick's own response to these nuanced distinctions is to mainly use the word imitation to designate an action that reproduces the qualities of another person that is 'instigated by the idea or perception of that person's behaviours, attitudes, or lifestyles' (Warnick, 2008, p.6). The use of imitation in the above sense might fit the purpose and aim of this study. However, it would still be difficult to set aside the common understanding of imitation as something which includes a conscious choice to copy or mimic, and the possibility of a reader misunderstanding something core before reaching the end of the original research title.

There is a further potential area for misunderstanding of the term imitation. Connecting imitation with mentoring Christian ministers/leaders (as opposed say to apprentice blacksmiths or potters) raises questions about the appropriateness of a process which seems to indicate slavish replication of attitudes, values and behaviour. The use of the alternative word, emulation, raises these issues too as what seems to be implied is conscious replication within a mentoring relationship. Seeming to require, expect or encourage emulation or imitation of a mentor as *exemplar* can imply a betrayal of human reason, authenticity and freedom to fulfil human potential (Warnick, 2008).

There are also limitations with the terms *role model* and *role modelling*. Newly accredited ministers are assigned a mentor within reasonable geographical reach of their first ministry post after initial formation at a Baptist college. Mentoring is part of a required process of continuing learning and self-reflection. Mentoring sessions of 60-90 minutes every three months mean limited contact. It is difficult to see how the term *role model* can be appropriate given that the mentee is unlikely to observe the functioning of their mentor within their own community/congregation. There is still a possibility of a modelling effect between a new Baptist minister and their more experienced mentor, however the scope for this is vastly reduced when compared to the mentoring experienced by an in-situation ministerial colleague. Although there may still be a modelling effect and proximity and distance do not necessarily undermine this positive impact (Allen et al, 2006), the word 'role' seems anachronistic.

The process of clarifying terms has helped to sharpen the focus of this study as an interest in the mimetic effect that occurs between a mentor and mentee. The case study is of mimetic effect in the mentoring of Baptist ministers. However, exploring mimetic effect increases understanding for those involved in developmental mentoring in other contexts. The word mimetic has the advantage of not yet being widely used and understood so that it cannot so easily carry ambiguity or inappropriate projections, though it has needed defining.

Mimetic desire underlies mimetic effect. According to Girard's (1976) theory of mimesis, this is a desire for what another or others is/are perceived to desire. Rather than desiring this object for its own sake or intrinsic value, human beings desire this thing (whether physical, or a 'virtue' or a 'vice') *because* it is desired by another. The other(s) who desire this other object are considered to be mediators of the desire. Product manufacturers rely on this mechanism when they show or advertise a successful celebrity endorsing or using their product. Identifying mimetic desire in isolation or in the abstract is difficult. It may be possible, however, to explore mimetic desire by working back from any reports of mimetic *effect* (identifiable attitudes, values and behaviour) between mentors and mentees. In seeking possible causes it is important to separate mimetic effect from prior similarity, for example shared and pre-existing values (Mitchell 2015). So, the research approach is to gather and analyse reports of aspects of mimetic effect between mentor and mentee, defined as the reproducing of identifiable attitudes, values and behaviour.

### 1.3 The aim of the study

The aim, therefore, of this research is to explore the dynamics of mimetic effect in mentoring using a case study of Baptist Ministers with the following objectives:

1. To critically review the literature relating to ministerial formation and mimetic effect in mentoring, psychological learning theories and practical theology.
2. To undertake primary research to identify and understand the dynamics of mimetic effect with Baptist ministers in mentoring relationships.
3. To analyse and explore emerging themes with mentoring practitioners and trainers in the field of Christian ministerial formation to gain additional perspectives on the process of mimetic effect.
4. To evaluate the results to generate explanations concerning the dynamics and potential of mimetic effect in mentoring which have application to the development of Baptist ministers and also theoretical and practical transferability for others in the field of mentoring.

This study seeks to go beyond reporting modelling presence in mentoring to a focus on the process that culminates in mimetic effect: a mentee reproducing but not consciously copying or imitating a mentor's attitudes, thoughts and behaviours. As an ordained minister - in a role that includes overseeing the formation of other ministers - spiritual-theological perspectives (eg Bailie, 1995; Alison, 1998) contribute vitally and relevantly to my focus on the presence of mimetic effect in mentoring Christian leaders. Although

mimetic *desire* is difficult to identify, it may be detected from the mimetic *effect* of identifiable attitudes, values and behaviour found in common between mentor and mentee, distinguished from other explanations like prior similarity and identification.

This study into the dynamics of mimetic effect also raises the possibility of fresh explanations leading to useful research and practical insights in organisations beyond communities of Christian faith. Secular organisations are interested in the way in which their desired ethical values, virtues, attitudes and behaviour are passed on and inspired. (Algoe and Haidt, 2009; Vianello, Galliani and Haidt, 2010). Exemplarity and modelling effect are also of interest (Kristjansson, K., 2007; Zagzebski, 2013; Walker and Hennig, 2004). Research into the specific dynamic of mimetic effect will add to role-modelling research and understanding about the transmission of the values underlying behaviour.

#### 1.4 Methodology

A mixed-methods case study methodology has been used. This methodology was designed to identify and build 'best fit' explanations of mimetic effect in the mentoring of Baptist ministers in accordance with critical realist assumptions. As part of my critical realist philosophy I have deliberately chosen to conduct this research based in a secular rather than sacred academic setting. This choice in part reflects a desire to avoid privileging faith or spiritual accounts of how mimesis and modelling work. I have sought, rather, to give an interdisciplinary account regarding the mechanism of mimetic effect which is as full as possible. My position as researcher is as a Christian and Baptist minister who has a place of belonging among the ministers with whom my research into mentoring has taken place and who is also committed to pursuing the critical realist philosophy and case study methodology outlined below.

My critical realist philosophical assumptions are informed by a progressive orthodox Christian faith understanding of the nature of reality (ontology) as determinative of epistemology. This ontology assumes both that there is a reality "out there" independent of observers, and that the world is socially constructed but only partly so (Easton, 2010). A mixed methods case-study approach with critical realist assumptions has allowed the most appropriate methodology seeking a rich, strong array of data sources to build best-fit explanation, while respecting the integrity of each method (Willig, 2008, p357). Case study methodology allows the possibility of full and intensive research using mixed methods and multiple confirmatory sources, each interpreted via several theoretical strands to build explanation of the dynamics and possible new theory (Easton, 2010). A



critical realist retroductive approach has involved moving back to ask what might account for the data – the causal powers active in mimetic effect (Sayer, 2004). Empirical traces in the data of the process of mimetic effect have been identified and explored to discover a possible generative mechanism. A generative mechanism is the enduring underlying causal process that gives rise to a phenomenon (Johnston and Smith, 2008). The phenomenon in view in this study is mimetic effect. This critical realist case study methodology has looked at links between participant data and causal structures or mechanisms. (Wynn, 2012).

This case study has involved a range of sources of data. A survey was made of all 246 Baptist ministers in two neighbouring regional Baptist Associations. This provided contextual information concerning mentoring relationships. It also provided valuable data identifying indications of mimetic effect for later analysis and for purposive selection of participants for interview according to theoretical expectations emerging from the literature review. A second source of data came from in-depth semi-structured interviews with each of five mentees and produced rich information concerning the presence and dynamic of mimetic effect in their dyads. As part of this phase of the study, subsequent in-depth interviews with the mentor from each of the mentee dyads generated a third source of information about the dynamic of mimetic effect in each of these mentoring relationships. Three experienced mentor-practitioners involved in ministerial formation were interviewed as a fourth source of information about their experience of and insights into mimetic effect.

Some analysis proceeded iteratively in order to serve each stage of data collection, for example identifying the presence of mimetic effect and variables in the experience of survey participants to facilitate selection of interview participants. Observed patterns in the data from interviewing mentees informed subsequent mentor interviews, and similarly themes from both of these were drawn on in mentor-practitioner interviews. Further descriptive analysis of the survey took place using a computerised software package to organise contextual data and explanatory factors. Thematic analysis was used to organise, categorise and interpret the interview data into themes and patterns as part of contributions to conclusions about explanatory factors in mimetic effect.

## 1.5 Outline of the study

In the next chapter a review is undertaken of the existing literature that relates to this area of research. There is a scarcity of studies directly relating to mimetic effect, still less regarding this dynamic within mentoring, and not at all within the context of mentoring Baptist ministers. There is also a gap in studies linking modelling to mentoring outcomes like changed attitudes and relational priorities in Christian leadership and ministry with research in other fields of work tending to focus on links with career advancement or salary achievement. Some studies explore connections between mentoring outcomes like character formation and relational leadership and modelling, or how modelling works in mentoring. Within the review a response is made to a gap in research into explanatory processes for modelling outcomes in mentoring. Psychological and philosophical studies that indicate contributory factors in the processes of mimetic learning, imitation, modelling and exemplarity are therefore reviewed. There is also a gap in mentoring and ministerial formation studies that investigate rather than simply refer to mimetic learning, imitation and modelling, and exemplarity. In the specific framework of ministerial formation 'spiritual' dynamics are often assumed with processes being ascribed to the work of God. Imitative modelling as a key concept has helped to identify other relevant studies or discussions in the related areas of social learning, ministerial theology, and mentoring research and literature. The overlapping concepts and keywords of exemplarity, modelling, imitation and 'mimetic' have also helped to identify relevant literature in the ministerial formation accounts of practical theology. These accounts tend to discuss rather than research mimetic dynamics. The commonality of these keywords across these main areas in the review suggest a possible conceptual framework for exploring the gaps with the focus of the study on participating ministers' own explanations of mimetic effect in mentoring. The requirement for an interdisciplinary approach in drawing a map of relevant studies and articles from literature on modelling in mentoring, mimetic learning and a practical theology of Baptist ministerial formation is shown as part of the review. The design of the study draws on or adapts existing interdisciplinary theoretical concepts referred to in the literature review.

The third chapter explains the case study methodology that has been chosen and its place within my critical realist paradigm. The appropriateness of a case-study comprising mixed-methods to identify and understand the dynamics of mimetic effect is explored. The case-study is outlined as comprising a quantitative survey from which mentees are selected for semi-structured interviews followed by further interviews with their mentors and with independent mentor-practitioners producing data of richness and depth. These

four sources of data provide multiple perspectives and the possibility of corroboration in seeking to understand and develop explanations for mimetic effect. The steps in obtaining the data are systematically described as is the process for analysis and seeking validity. The chapter concludes by describing how issues of ethical considerations and my potential researcher bias and position as an 'insider' were addressed.

The fourth chapter reports the results of the mentoring of Baptist ministers survey that are relevant to this study into mimetic effect. In this quantitative stage of the study, descriptive statistics and statistical analysis are used to analyse the data in order to identify the possible presence of mimetic effect and variables which might contribute to this dynamic. The process of purposively selecting participants for stage two qualitative interviews is also described.

Qualitative thematic analysis related to the data from interviews with Baptist minister mentees, their mentors, and with experienced practitioners in the field of mentoring Christian leaders follows in chapters five and six. The fifth chapter concentrates on themes and findings regarding the presence of mimetic effect and the particular contribution from mentees to this dynamic.

In chapter six the focus is on themes and findings concerning the contribution that a mentor makes to an outcome of mimetic effect. The final section of the chapter draws together the findings of chapters four to six by presenting a new model of mimetic effect in mentoring.

Chapter seven summarises the significant findings including further application of the model, contribution to understanding of mimetic effect in mentoring, and the implications for mentoring practice and ministerial formation and continuing development. Limitations of the study are acknowledged and future research possibilities in the light of the conclusions and proposed model are described.

## Chapter Two: Literature review

### 2.1 Method of review

Several methods have been used to identify relevant literature for this study of the dynamics of mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. Key terms like *mentoring* and/or *coaching* combined with *emulation*, *imitation*, *imitative*, *mimetic*, *mimesis*, *imitative learning*, *mimetic learning* and/or *minister/ministerial formation* and/or *modelling* have been used in computerised searches using *Google*, *Google Scholar*, *Science Direct*, *PsychInfo* and both *Discover* and the *Library Catalogue* for Oxford Brookes. Specific searches for possible articles and references to these keywords or concepts have been made in workplace and specialist journals, both online and also manually among the potentially relevant journals at Oxford Brookes libraries in Wheatley and Harcourt. In particular, the following relevant literature has been examined: *Journal for Vocational Behavior*, *International Journal of Evidence-Based Coaching and Mentoring*, *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, *The Journal of Management*, *The Academy of Management Review*, *Baptist Quarterly*, and *Journal of Adult Theological Education*. References from articles and journals not previously revealed within these searches have then been separately accessed and followed-up. Both *Mendeley* suggestions and *Google Scholar Alert* have been used to indicate new theses, articles and studies featuring the words mimetic+learning and mimetic+mentoring. All promising leads have been initially followed-up on-line and obtained and reviewed where directly relevant to the study.

The review revealed there is no research in the specific area of modelling and emulation in mentoring Baptist Ministers and very little on this topic in the wider area of ministerial formation and Christian leadership. When role-modelling is referred to in guides to mentoring practice books written from within the perspective of Christian leadership formation (Lewis, 2009; Pue, 2005) it tends to be mentioned rather than analysed. Addressing this gap means identifying literature relating to mentoring and/or mimetic learning within *Baptist ministerial formation* and the practical theology by which this is informed as one section of the review. Exemplarity, emulation, imitation, modelling and mimetic are keywords in this area.

Each of these keywords also provide an important lead in identifying relevant *mentoring literature* as a fundamental area of this review. This is particularly important as there are very few references to mimetic effect in mentoring. One exception is McCullough's (2013) exploration of the correlates of motivational and imitative role modelling by

professionals. This offers a number of useful and relatively rare leads not least as she attempts to make connections between the sort of role-modelling that happens in a mentoring relationship and imitative desire. Finding objective criteria and quantitative studies into the effects of role-modelling has been difficult. Some relevant information has been available from qualitative studies into mentoring and other related disciplines.

The gap in mentoring literature therefore means it is necessary to move beyond research and literature that simply names modelling as a significant mentoring function to that which in some way explores the mimetic learning mechanism in modelling that contributes to mimetic effect. This chapter, therefore, reviews the literature relating to mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers, at the intersection of *mentoring*, *mimetic learning* (the psychological dynamics of imitation and modelling), and a practical theology of *Baptist ministerial formation* (see Figure 2.1).

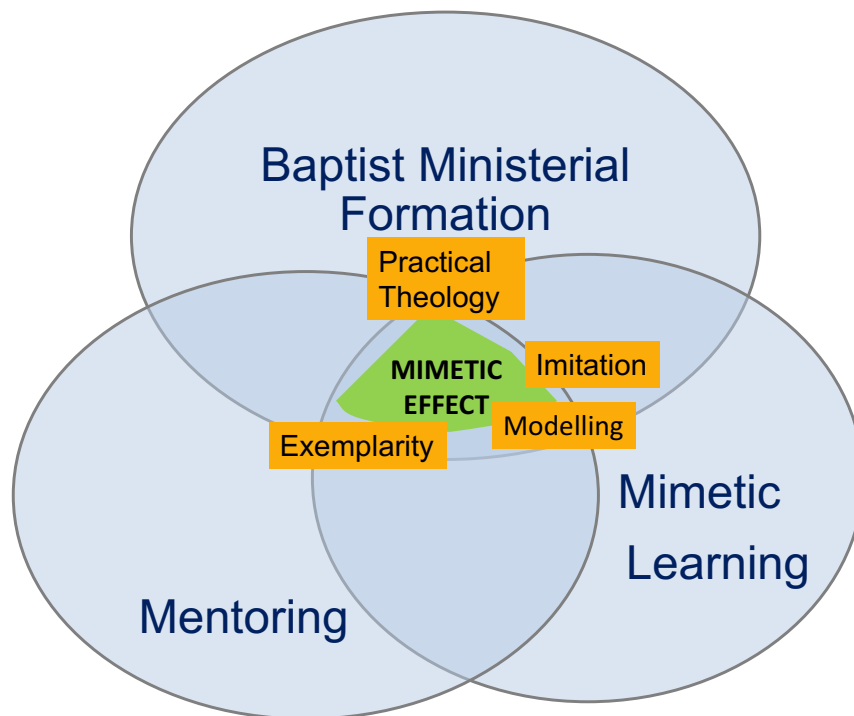


Figure 2.1 Literature map

## 2.2 Mentoring literature

This review is based firmly within mentoring studies, and specifically the identifiable area of research into aspects of modelling and learning (see Figure 2.1). The context of the literature reviewed is the development and relatively recent emergence of mentoring as an identifiable area of study and research. This large body of research and literature is represented by the human development research of Levinson et al (1978) as the first to emphasise mentoring in the USA with its value as a trusting developmental relationship. Characterised by love, mentoring can enable people to navigate life transitions more quickly and successfully (Levinson et al, 1978). A keywork is Kram's (1988) original qualitative study into mentoring and career success and the contribution of career or psychosocial (emotional and cognitive support) functions in mentoring, including role-modelling. Kram has undertaken a more recent follow-up look with Ragins (2007) at contemporary work-place mentoring. Mentoring approaches range from the American model of mentee as protected protégé with a sponsorship-transactional emphasis (Kram, 1988) to a Northern European relational-developmental emphasis (Clutterbuck, 2014). Crisp and Cruz (2009) find continuing ambiguity concerning the understanding and application of the word mentoring as constituting something offered by a mentor or simply applied to a function, with a need for more theory. These and continuing idiosyncracies in the development and definition of mentoring (Cox, 1999) by researchers has an impact on how far the results of their studies can be compared (Haggard et al., 2011; Bozeman and Feeney, 2007).

There is a historical and philosophical context for the concept of mentoring. In a critical narrative analysis, Garvey (2017) critically surveys the historical and philosophical antecedents of the term mentoring. Garvey especially examines the idealised account that is told with reference to the role of trusted court friend, Mentor, with Telemachus (son of King Odysseus) in Homer's *Odyssey*. In what Garvey describes as 'falsifying narratives' (2017, loc. 82-3), he notes the gap between the philosophical assumptions regarding mentoring in the Greek situation of Homer's time and in a range of other antecedents and models. These other models are named by Garvey (2017) as 'Knight and Squire', 'Apprenticeship', and also Francois Fénelon's 'Télémaque' figure in his influential and ahead-of-his-time 1699 re-construction of Homer's mentor figure in *Les Aventures de Télémaque*. Contemporary philosophical values found by Garvey in Fénelon include 'independence and self-efficacy', 'support and challenge', 'experiential learning', 'psychosocial development', 'trust and emotional commitment', 'altruism' and notably for the purpose of this study into mimetic effect, 'developing values and virtue'

(2017. loc. 92). Interpreted carefully, these themes anticipate the movement of more recent trends in mentoring values and assumptions. This movement has been *away from* a utilitarian focus on human development and social control to serve organisational or societal needs and *towards* socially just, person-centred, radically human becoming (Garvey, 2017, loc. 100-101). A trend in mentoring towards a focus on human becoming invites a response to the question ‘what might it mean or look like to be human?’ and ‘how might we get there?’ The nature of responses to these questions influences and critiques the models of mentoring valued by the researchers and practitioners of the mentoring community.

Tensions in how mentoring is understood are also reflected in the literature, for example in Education-based research (Mullen, 2017). These tensions are connected to the move from traditional mentoring theories based in antecedents like apprenticeship and utilitarian organisational approaches to more human becoming theories as discussed above (Mullen, 2017). They also feature in the literature around other polarities of framework including informal or formal, identical or diverse, mentoring or coaching, mentoring and induction, face-to-face and e-mentoring and self-regulated and other-directed mentoring (Mullen, 2017, loc. 113-114).

It is beyond the purpose of this review to present a comprehensive survey of theories or studies into mentoring. Studies with limited relevance include those focusing on the characteristics of effective mentors and mentees, different phases and outcomes, and the effects of differing cultural and contextual factors and factors in matching and recruiting (Allen and Eby, 2007). Studies have shown that mentoring is effective but has not been accompanied by in-depth research into the dynamic processes relating to behaviour, cognition, motivation and affect within dyad encounters (Mullen and Schunk, 2013, p.362). Mullen and Schunk (2013) recommend drawing on the literature on self-regulated learning theories to explore these processes, in particular social cognitive theory, though (as they admit) the model that they outline focuses on cognitive-behavioural aspects rather than interpersonal dynamics. This illustrates the difficulty of and lack of progress in quality research into the dynamics of mentoring and possible theory building.

More recently, however, there has been a move away from studies into the functional contributions in effective mentoring to research into relational and affiliative aspects (Ragins, 2016). These aspects are described by Ragins as high quality relating which is mutually beneficial, meeting participants needs, and accompanied by ‘experiences of

relational closeness (care, concern, responsiveness, vulnerability, emotional connection and commitment)' (2016, p.229). This high quality relational mentoring goes beyond traditional protégé approaches, can be strategically pursued and results in inspiring, energised, transformative growth into becoming the best that a person can be (Ragins 2016, p.239). Despite a general paucity of studies into developmental dynamics in mentoring (Haddock-Millar, 2017), Ragins (2016) finds that the high quality relating described above is a key underlying factor in the mechanism of positive mentoring outcomes.

Within the overall context of mentoring research, the particular area of *modelling* (a concept also found in the other areas of the review like mimetic learning and practical theology) within mentoring functions appears to be fundamental. Role-modelling is an established concept in mentoring (Speizer, 1981; Gibson, 2004, McCullough, 2013), either as one dimension of the *psychosocial* function of mentoring (Kram, 1988) or as a distinct third mentoring function (Scandura and Williams, 2001; Castro and Scandura, 2004) or one of four domains of mentoring (Crisp and Cruz, 2009). The debate about whether role-modelling is only one aspect of psychosocial functions or a separate function, has been further clarified by the qualitative data from the mixed-method investigation by Murphy and Kram (2010) into the impact of business graduates work and non-work developmental networks on career success. They found that role-modelling is perceived as an equally broad function distinct from career and psychosocial support (2010). Work relationships were positively perceived as career behaviours to emulate; and negatively, some aspects devaluing relationships were to be avoided (Murphy and Kram, 2010). Non-work role-modelling was positively perceived as shaping values and work-ethic, and negatively perceived regarding work-life balance (Murphy and Kram 2010). Kwan et al (2010) have investigated the influence of work *and* non-work developmental relationships as overlapping domains. They found that a mentor's work-based role-modelling, perceived positively in regard to relational job-learning and personal skill development, also mediated work to family enrichment via the transfer of enhanced relational skills (Kwan et al 2010). These findings are of interest in this study where a vocational understanding of ministry means that work-life boundaries, including those in mentoring relationships, are blurred.

Omission by researchers of definitions that make explicit reference to role modelling as a core attribute when this is considered to be such an established and key function is notable. Bozeman et al (2007) highlight the frequent return to define mentoring. Notwithstanding these omissions, there is, however, a fresh emphasis on the impact of



role modelling. Role-modelling has been re-affirmed in a recent United States-based full quantitative meta-analysis of studies that investigate the protégé-reported impact of mentoring functions on outcomes including job satisfaction, salary and promotions (Dickson et al, 2014). Based on the limited number of primary studies undertaken so far, they confirmed that role-modelling is a distinct function alongside career development and psychosocial support and inferred that it is the strongest predictor of outcomes (Dickson et al, 2014). This is seen as corroborating leadership theories which predict that effective leaders inspire and influence by providing their own behaviour as an example to follow and whose modelling increases subordinates' inner confidence that they can complete a given task successfully. (Dickson et al, 2014). Such influence happens even when mentors don't think their protégé is watching (Dickson et al, 2014).

The dynamics of modelling effect in mentoring are explored in recent research within the healthcare sector. Effective mentoring intentionally works with the desire for and contribution of role-modelling, by observing good practice *and* through imbibing awareness of professional attitudes (Kilgallon and Thompson, 2012; Salter, 2014). Kilgallon and Thompson (2012) suggest that this social aspect of role-modelling goes beyond simple imitation and results in actual learning when values, beliefs attitudes and aspirations are transferred to the mentee. Drawing on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, Bailey-McHale and Hart (2013) state that active, reflective, intentional role-modelling moves learning beyond simple observation-based emulation to include connections between practice, theory, values and attitudes (Bailey-McHale and Hart, 2013). Bailey-McHale and Hart (2013) conclude that critical reflection needs to be facilitated rather than assuming that appropriate attitudes and practice will simply be 'caught'. In a context-specific quantitative experimental study of the role modelling effect on nursing students' clinical judgement, two of Bandura's social cognitive role-modelling constructs were upheld: modelled behaviour is more likely to be adopted if it leads to valued outcomes for the individual, and, if the model is similar to the observer with admired status and the behaviour has functional value (Coram, 2016). Role modelling was one theme in a qualitative study of 117 mentor-protégé dyads in university settings which employed content analysis, and identified protégé needs and desirable qualities in a mentor across eight components of effectiveness (Eller et al, 2013). They identified 'passion and inspiration' as desired by protégés in a mentor and, rather than seeing it as part of role modelling, treated it separately and concluded it was worthy of further investigation (Eller et al, 2014).

The theoretical frameworks of mentoring may be divided into three categories. These are learning (social and self-regulated, behaviourist, cognitive, constructivist, and transformative), developmental (life-stages and constructive) and social (socialisation, social or leader-member exchange, social network) categories (Dominguez, 2017). These theoretical frameworks are the foundational assumptions on which knowledge about relationships – in this case mentoring relationships – is built and verified (Dominguez, 2017). Bailey-McHale and Hart (2013) suggest that learning theories inform a flexible, person-centred approach to mentoring, supported by reference to the social learning theory of Bandura (1977). Their view of role-modelling, however, goes well beyond the simple formula of observation leads to emulation, preferring instead recommendation of a more self-chosen active role-modelling (Bailey-McHale and Hart, 2013). A summary of research published in the British Medical Journal (Paice et al, 2002) concludes that consultant role models are potentially effective in passing on professional values, attitudes, and behaviours but doubts are raised about informal mentoring from some consultants which models undesirable qualities and raises questions about the training and approach of doctors who act as mentors.

Antecedents of modelling effect are investigated in a noteworthy and rare empirical investigation into the design, training, matching and process of formal mentoring programmes as measured by career, psychosocial, modelling and mentorship quality outcomes (Allen et al, 2006). Among Allen et al's (2006) recommendations for design of such programmes and future theory development and refining are three factors that increase role-modelling effect. These factors are higher input into the match by both members of the dyad and relatively greater closeness in rank; and, for both of these sets of variables, identification between mentee and mentor (Allen et al, 2006). Proximity and geographical distance did not have a detrimental effect on the relationship and modelling effect (Allen et al, 2006). In a meta-analysis of antecedents of mentoring support, Ghosh (2014) found that relative closeness of age between mentor and mentee had a positive impact on perceived levels of mentoring support. Using Kram's four stages of mentoring (initiation, cultivation, separation and redefinition), Ghosh (2014) also found that levels of mentoring support were perceived as highest in the earlier stages.

There are some relational explanations of how modelling works in mentoring. Kram's early research mentions several factors in the way modelling may work including transferential parent feelings, emotional attachment, and varying degrees of identification most obviously affected by cross gender mentoring (Kram, 1988). A more recent meta-analysis of antecedents of mentoring support, however, found inconsistent *empirical*

associations but positive *relational* indications regarding gender and ethnic impact on levels of mentoring support (Ghosh, 2014). In the same meta-analysis, studies of levels of perceived trust between mentors and protégés also indicated an increase in perceived levels of role modelling effect (Ghosh, 2014). Gayle's (2010) study of therapist development through mentoring examines the under-researched and important area of intersubjective and relational dynamics. Psychodynamic concepts like transference/counter-transference, identification/differentiation, and neutrality/disclosure are applied to the mentoring relationship though considered to be less charged than in a psychoanalytic one (Gayle, 2010). Role modelling through words, metaphors and symbols is said to lead to new insights and fresh meaning-making (Gayle, 2010, p. 64).

The positive contribution through modelling of similarity and liking between mentors and protégés is seen as part of a process of identification (Lankau et al, 2005). Lankau et al (2005) found that while deep level similarity is important, for example work values and personality characteristics, liking is more important for informal mentoring than formal. This raises questions about how variant beliefs and attitudes influence protégés if strength of mentoring relationship relates to existing similarity (Lankau et al, 2005; Sluss and Ashforth, 2007). An empirical study by Mitchell et al (2015) examined the antecedents and outcomes of perceived similarity in mentoring relationships in a sample of 82 matched mentor-protégé dyads. They found that the impact of perceived similarity was nuanced: shared levels of relational attachment/security led to positive outcomes only when the similarity was high/positive or low/negative but not when the level was medium (Mitchell et al, 2015). Significantly for the focus of this review, role-modelling was found to have a mediating influence on outcomes so that perceived protégé similarity to mentors ultimately influenced commitment to their organisations and organisational values (Mitchell et al, 2015). These results lead them to recommend methods (sharing personality inventories, reducing hierarchical distance in a mentoring dyad) to increase identification and therefore role-modelling effect (Mitchell et al, 2015). Although lowering interpersonal distance is indicated as helpful, it is also suggested that any building of relationship increases the chances of finding things in common and strengthens relating.

A cross-disciplinary bridge between modelling in mentoring literature and mimetic learning is found in leadership studies. One representative example addresses the question of how an authentic leader impacts followers' attitudes, behaviours and performance by leading out of deep convictions, beliefs and principles, (Avolio et al, 2004). Authentic leadership stresses the importance of role modelling, leading by

example, and exhibiting high moral standards, honesty, and integrity (Avolio et al, 2004). A positive relationship was found between authentic leadership and personal psychological identification as well as social identification with collective aspirations and values (Avolio et al, 2004). There are similarities in their conclusions to a multidisciplinary article on exemplarity and imitation by Steinbock (2001) which is discussed further in this literature review in the following section (2.3) on mimetic learning.

This review of studies of modelling confirms that it is regarded as a distinct mentoring function with positive outcomes for mentees on career development, satisfaction and salary. In concentrating on the modelling function, it is acknowledged that other mentoring functions also contribute to effectiveness and positive outcomes including that of mentee development. There is a gap, however, in studies into the mechanism behind a positive impact from modelling. Explanations of how modelling works are confined to a limited number of studies in which reference is made to similarity, identification, exemplarity and/or processes of transference rather than research.

### 2.3 Mimetic learning literature

A second key area of this review is that of *mimetic learning* (See Figure 2.1). This term includes investigations into the dynamics of modelling and the process of social transmission in imitation found in behavioural social learning research as fundamental to human development (Hoppit and Laland 2013). Mimetic learning can include psychoanalytic theories of mimetic identification or philosophical, meaning-orientated theories though there is a lack of confidence that these theories are up to fully explaining imitation (Warnick, 2009). Many important aspects of psychoanalytic theory can be usefully integrated with imitation research to better understand aspects of human mimesis that have been neglected by mimetic scholars (Garrels, 2006). For example, in understanding how deferred imitation actually functions in the mind of the adult and the process when an adult imitates old, affect-laden, scripts (good or bad) even in the presence of new imitative models (Garrels, 2006).

Potolsky (2006) sees mimesis, translated best in his view as imitation, as a dominant idea not only in western theories of art and imaging but also in human social learning; it stretches back through Freudian ideas of modelling and parental identification to Plato and Aristotle. 'Mimesis has always been at once a theory of art and an explicit theory of human nature.' (Potolsky, 2006, p115). Potolsky (2006) holds that the pervasive

assumption of imitation in human nature is a fundamental concept and a self-fulfilling process. This pervasiveness is said to hinder deconstruction of the concept of imitation in order to see other theories of human social learning and becoming (Potolsky, 2006). He recommends that other non-Western explanations need to be explored more fully including ideas about imitation in Christian faith (Potolsky, 2006). Potolsky's recommendations seem to reflect his prior constructionist stance given his failure to describe an alternative explanation of human becoming which has not been influenced by the concept of imitation originally explored by Plato and Aristotle.

A recent monograph explores how people learn in and through their work and makes notable use of the concept of mimetic learning (Billett, 2014). Billett's interdisciplinary approach draws on anthropological, psychological and neurological studies in concluding that mimetic learning happens through intra- and inter-psychological processes which go beyond observation and imitation (Billett, 2014). 'Just doing work' makes a greater contribution to learning than other, also highly rated, factors like interaction with a mentor (Billett, 2014, p43). Conscious and unconscious reflection on work experience leading to meaning-making are said to occur (Billett, 2014, p43). This is a process of embodied cognition increasingly recognised by scientific identification of neural correlation with characteristically human imitative learning (Billett, 2014; see also Iacoboni, 2005; Downey, 2010).

### 2.3.1 Imitation

Imitation and the contribution of the social context are of relevance to community environments like Baptist church life and ministry as the context for this study. Warnick's (2009) comprehensive inquiry into learning by example, surveys and analyses models of human exemplarity and imitative learning as an educational dynamic and as a critical philosophical problem. Warnick (2009) discusses how human models and exemplars are selected, identified with, inspire, and influence, in congruence with an individual or group idea of self. The meaning of imitative activity as a signal to the model, to others in a specific group, and to the imitator themselves are explored. A study by Oppong (2014) focuses on the individual and the way that exemplarity and imitation work in the social context of practices, communities and traditions. Oppong (2014) matches Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory with the structuration theory of Giddens concluding that structural influences ('rules', resources and systems) need to be understood, researched and integrated with empirical studies and conclusions about individual human agency.

Imitation is also seen as connected to the goal and intention of a model. The growth in psychological research on imitation means the latest definitions of imitation have not caught up with advances in empirical findings (Fridland and Moore 2015). In reviewing this psychological research, Fridland and Moore (2015) seek to make sense of the paradoxical behaviour of children in 'over-imitating' an observed technique in order to achieve a goal as compared to chimpanzees who omit any unnecessary steps in reaching a similarly observed objective. They acknowledge the possibility of social affiliation and connection as one aspect of human behaviour but also notice that a model's intentional actions (even if 'unnecessary') are repeated while unintentional/accidental ones are not. Goals plus *intentional* means-actions are important. This leads them to formulate the following definition of imitation as 'the reproduction of an observed behavior where the agent imitating (1) recognizes the behavior of the demonstrator as goal-directed and (2) has some particular interest in or concern for replicating the precise technique performed by the author of the observed action.' (Fridland and Moore, 2015 p. 872). This definition allows for the way in which a child sees it as important to reproduce a model's goals and action as an end in itself though the authors are open-minded about why children value this end (Fridland and Moore, 2015).

Imitation is also studied within human developmental and cognitive sciences. Behavioural research into imitation which studies the developmental behaviour of apes/and or children may seem irrelevant to a study into adult modelling. The pervasive nature of human mimetic responses, however, traces back to earlier pre-language and complex cognitive stages of infancy than conceived by Freud, Piaget and Skinner (Meltzoff, 2011). It is also now thought to continue throughout adulthood (Meltzoff, 2002; Garrels, 2006; Wulf, 2009). Far from newborns being radically egocentric, Freudian social isolates, or blank behavioural canvases, they are increasingly understood as able from the earliest days to mirror and map acts of observed others onto acts of their own body processing the acts of others as 'like me' (Meltzoff, 2007, pp. 129-130). Such neonatal imitation and the possibility of neural overlaps between action perception and action production in early human development are seen as the first indications of social cognition. The need for additional research into developmental social neuroscience as distinct from developmental cognitive neuroscience is indicated (Meltzoff, 2007). Meltzoff (2007) and others see these early developmental possibilities and intrinsic 'like me' identification as the beginnings of the ability to share others' goals and intentions (Oghourlian, 2011). Recent empirical research on primate and human imitation places increased emphasis on the imitation of goals and underlying intentions. Garrels (2011)

draws together multidisciplinary research in Girard-inspired (Girard, 1976) mimetic theory (where a subject desires according to the model-mediated desires of another) and those interested in goal-directed imitation and its role in social cognition, empathy, and learning (Garrels, 2011; see also Livingston, 1992).

In describing mimetic effect, Garrels (2006) notes convergence between empirical research on imitation and Girard's theory of psychological mimesis. He draws attention to the importance of this more than mere 'copycat' behaviour stretching into adulthood and beyond the learning and development of childhood (Garrels, 2006). He highlights increasing empirical research into the 'how' of mimesis. This research includes the way in which a mimetic dynamic leads to similar goals and desires between a model and person facilitated even by non-verbal communication, as a fresh factor in theories of motivation and as an elemental *mirror neuron* neural mechanism in neurological and neurophysiological experiments (Garrels, 2006). For Gallese (2011), mimesis is neurobiologically grounded and is neither intrinsically good or bad. Human openness to others includes being wired to identify with one another, sharing the same objects and goals, and this can be neurally grounded in mirroring neural mechanisms (Gallese 2011). In these ways imitative learning and mimetic dynamics are connected and rooted in human neurobiology. Iacoboni also draws on research into mirror neurons and the implications of empirical data that 'mirror neurons code the intentions associated with the observed...actions' (2009, p.74), helping re-enact in the brain the intentions of others giving profound understanding of the intentions and emotions of others, enabling social behaviour (Iacoboni, 2009).

### 2.3.2 Exemplarity and modelling

Some of the literature critically explores a link between moral exemplars and emulation. A process of reasoned, representative, ideals-emulating, Aristotelian role-modelling and self-transformative character formation is discovered rather than wholesale and uncritical imitation of actual individual exemplars (Kristjánsson, 2006). In a field study of American business managers, Brown and Trevino (2014) found that the experience of an ethical role model in childhood or in career was an antecedent of subordinate-rated ethical leadership. This antecedent is said to illustrate positive role modelling effect from a social learning perspective though the process is not explained (Trevino, 2014). Some attempt is made in a paper by Moberg (2000) to understand the process of role modelling in acquiring virtues by surveying behavioural sciences for insights about inspirational exemplarity. He concludes that inspiration happens when a model is similar, faces

parallel problems, and is observed to work through to solutions that are seen as attainable (Moberg, 2000). Brace-Govan (2013) also found that 'coping' rather than 'mastery' role-models are relevant. There was a greater effect on inspiration of behaviour change or aspiration where a role-model's approach and behaviour and that of young adults seems relevant, attainable, and with whom it seems possible to connect and identify (Brace-Govan, 2013). This was in contrast with the effect of a 'celebrity' observed from afar (Brace-Govan, 2013). In her discussion of exemplarist virtue theory, Zagzebski (2013) notes how model-exemplars who are considered to be most admirable are most imitable. An abstract moral theory or map has no particular power to motivate moral behaviour but 'the feeling of admiration is an attraction that carries the impetus to imitate with it' (Zagzebski, 2013). While positive about Zagzebski's furthering of research into emotion-based learning, Kristjansson (2017) also emphasises the concept of moral-awe-inspired modelling of a desirable quality. Lord and Shondrick (2011) emphasise the importance of leading by example and the value of modelling processes in follower-learning. They stress the importance of a multi-perspective approach (symbolic-rational, connectionist-neuronal, and embodied-affective) to leader-follower knowledge and processes, in particular the embodied/embedded strand (Lord and Shondrick, 2011).

Discussions of mimetic learning are careful to emphasise desiring similarity rather than sameness. There is a distinction in the literature concerning desiring similar goals, values and attitudes to a model or exemplar without simply mimicking or parroting a leader (Steinbock, 2001). Leadership is about action and performance, so a leader may be copied, followed, and obeyed, in achieving a goal or task whereas exemplarity is about personal transformation, living with same orientation, direction and manner as the exemplar (Steinbock, 2001). Such mimetic learning is what Wulf (2008) describes as a new kind of perception, seeing, living, doing as an 'other', but in one's own way. So mimetic learning steps beyond mere imitation or copying to denote a process of desiring similarity but not sameness (Wulf, 2008).

This section has reviewed studies and articles in the area of mimetic learning, indicating that imitative outcomes are influenced by group norms within a social context as well as by the goals and intentions of an individual model. Mimetic effect is the outcome of an identifiable set of factors and processes. This involves a conscious and unconscious reflective, self-critical turn towards the orientation of an identified-with, exemplary, mediating model. This model exhibits an apparently attainable approach to life and leadership. Such indications of contributory factors in the process of mimetic learning and the power of imitation as a human dynamic are relevant to this study exploring



mimetic effect. It is acknowledged that the contributory factors named in this review are situated outside of the context of a mentoring relationship. They are also beyond the framework of ministerial formation where other 'spiritual' dynamics are often assumed to be at work.

## 2.4 Ministerial formation literature

Ministerial formation from a Baptist perspective is a distinct concept and area in this literature review (see Figure 2.1). It is rooted in practical theology and assumes a spiritual dynamic but it is worked out in human patterns of modelling, imitation, exemplarity and mentoring. Making connections between biblical and theological traditions and human situations, culture and, in this review, ministerial formation, are the remit of both applied and also practical theology (Swinton and Mowat, 2006). Practical theology seeks to critically reflect on the complex and multi-layered nature of human situations and experience whereas applied theology draws on existing biblical and theological material traditions to shape experience (Swinton and Mowat, 2006). Practical theology does this by bringing together Christian tradition and practice and other forms of theory and experience in a mutually correlative and constructive critical dialogue which is theistic but truly open to fresh learning and insight (Swinton and Mowat, 2006).

The dynamic of any mimetic mechanism in ministerial formation and contemporary Christian approaches to mentoring goes back to the New Testament accounts of discipleship: 'following Jesus' (Holy Bible, 1995, Mark 1.17) and 'imitating Paul' (Holy Bible, 1995, 1 Corinthians 11.1). Aspects of the concept of imitating God are also found in the New Testament, for example: 'Be imitators of God, as beloved children and live in love' (Holy Bible, 1995, Ephesians 5.1-2). This concept freshly applies explicit encouragement to imitate God's own character and 'practice' in the Old Testament, for example in the fourth commandment to rest on and keep the Sabbath just as God did (Holy Bible, 1995, Exodus 20.8-11), and in Leviticus 19.2 (Holy Bible, 1995,) 'be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy' (Barton, 2014). This builds on a hermeneutic of God's people being able to make moral choices by distinguishing exemplary from unworthy modelling within Old Testament narrative, through obedience to as well as imitation of God as parallel dynamics in the ethics of Ancient Israel (Barton, 2014).

There are some thoughtful expositions of the dynamic of mentoring and formation in Christian formation literature (Copan, 2010), though any mechanism is mostly assumed and understood in a spiritual way (Mallison, 1998; Lewis, 2009). Mayes (2009) identifies

the role of the Spirit in shaping a minister's life and ministry as characterised by a Christ-like pattern but fails to describe this process. Mayes himself comments that theological-spiritual explanations of formation are notable by their absence from church documents about ministerial formation apart from brief explicit references in ordination and induction liturgies (Mayes, 2009 cf. Blyth and Ellis, 2005). Some spiritual and psychological claims are made about the dynamics of imitation which can be either destructive or constructive if via an enlightened faith-inspired self-giving mimesis (Swartley, 2000). These claims are Girard-influenced (1966, 2001) insights where mimesis is understood as desiring what another person desires - positively or negatively - and are an aspect of practical theology applied to personal and ministerial formation.

In equipping ordained British Baptist Ministers the word formation rather than training is a preferred way of speaking (Oxley, 2002; Clarke, 2015). Formation applies to the development of competency in a range of pastoral and leadership tasks where techniques, skills and knowledge are learned and applied. Formation into *a way of being* refers to the character, attitudes, values, and relationship to God and others that characterise a minister. To be a minister is to receive a call to a way of being, a rule of life, formed in the process of ministerial formation (Goodliff, 2010). Baptist Union official documents describe a minister as embodying Christ (Faith and Unity Committee, Baptist Union of Great Britain, 1994). It is a holistic process and shaping of a whole life developing character, spirituality, ministerial skills fit for congregational leadership and enabling mission (Goodliff, 2017). Other denominations also emphasise being able to interpret the world through the lens of Christian faith and to respond habitually with practical wisdom to circumstances in ways that live out Christian character (Heywood, 2013) rather than academic knowledge of the Bible, doctrine or church history alone.

This spirituality of ministry and formation can be seen in the following overviews of historical and contemporary influences on Baptist discipleship, mission, church and ministry. These emphasise the spiritual dynamic in this process, where the minister mediates the grace and presence of Christ, and is set apart (ordained) trusting that the Spirit... 'will determine the life of this believer in ways that are consonant with a life of Christ-like sacrificial service to the churches' (Holmes, 2012). This is termed as being 'shaped by the gospel - that is shaped by grace - if the true gospel is to be preached' (Ellis, 2008, p.183). This emphasis on personal character and spirituality includes a weighty, spiritual non-authoritarian 'authority of personality and truth' (Fiddes, 2006, p.99) and imitation of the self-giving humility of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Fiddes, 2006).

#### 2.4.1 Ministerial Formation and Mentoring

Mentoring is seen as one, valuable, influence on personal and ministerial character formation. While training implies tasks, formation speaks of cultivating habits of character developed in various ways including spiritual direction and mentoring (Colwell, 2005). Such formation is especially relevant for the increasing number of Baptists who have a sacramental understanding of ministry as mediating Christ's presence (Goodliff, 2010). As the Baptist Union ordination service states, ministers are understood as primarily called to be disciples along with all other Christians (Blyth and Ellis, 2005), though with a secondary and distinct calling to be ministers. Character formation is fundamental for all Christians but ministers are particularly called to be examples to the flock (Blyth and Ellis, 2005). One pathway to such growth as a disciple is represented by mentoring. General mentoring discussions within spiritual growth literature, while sometimes devotional, put flesh on the cultural and theological bones (Horsfall, 2008; Pue, 2005; Clevedon Baptist Church, 2015). Mentoring includes the modelling (authentic living out) of the mentor's relationship with God, for spiritual connectedness is prized above the outcome of skills and character (Bickerton et al, 2015). Bickerton et al's (2015) study of the antecedents of clergy well-being found that, compared to other occupations, mentoring does not increase ministers' work engagement per se but facilitates finding fresh spiritual meaning and resources for participating in God's call.

Baptist ministerial formation and the need for mentoring can be placed alongside wider Christian ministry and leadership literature describing how to mentor leaders and ministers. Two of these (Lewis, 2009; Mallison, 1998) have been used in the BUGB Ministries Team (2013) briefing of mentors for Newly Accredited Ministers. Lewis's (2009) book is a Bible-based practical guide focusing on enabling a mentee to cooperate with the work of the Spirit in their life. It is based in a professional Doctorate of Ministry action research study with the UK Bible Society into the mentoring of pastors. Brown (2001) has found that a limited view of mentoring has sometimes prevailed with experienced and properly trained mentors needed alongside knowledge and skills training in the spiritual formation of Baptist ministers. Cohall and Cooper (2010) also emphasise the need for mentoring of younger pastors by older ones for the challenges of spiritual political leadership often exercised by American Baptist ministers. The danger of passing on a toxic culture is indicated by Gortner and Dreibelbis (2007) who found in their study of mentoring experience of Episcopal priests that mentors influence vocational identities, practices and skills but also fail to pass on needed key competencies and skills. Instead studied mentors perpetuated systemic church

pathologies like clergy non-assertiveness and missional passivity. A different dynamic within the supervisor-mentor relationship of ministerial field education is the influence by ministerial mentors on a mentee's meaning-making. This is noted by Emily Click (in Floding, 2011, p.42) who suggests that a mentor's own attitudes, values and behaviour influence those of the trainee minister in their meaning-making despite community, pastoral and theological reflection. The word 'reflection' is the only reference to a mechanism by which such influence occurs.

Other, non-Baptist, ministerial formation and leadership books and articles explore mentoring, the dynamics of imitation and the development of ministers' character. Stevenson (2009) situates his research into the specific skill of preaching in the context of social rather than cognitive learning. This includes investigation of the dynamic of imitation, the effect of role-models, and within this the effect of informal and formal mentor relationships. Mentoring and modelling are one important aspect within a community of agreed sermonic enterprise (Stevenson, 2009). In cross-denominational evangelical circles, mentoring is seen as important for character formation (Tenelshof, 1999) and a vital support for full and holistic ministerial development (Tilley, 2002), including mentor-like supervisory-protégé approaches to reflective development (Huizing, 2011). According to Wolfeich (2007), the purpose of mentoring is the cultivation and encouragement of a pastoral habitus.

#### 2.4.2 Formation, modelling and exemplarity

An emphasis on imitation and exemplarity is held together in some approaches to mentoring ministers, for example Tidball (2008) who traces a range of ministry patterns as inspirational models for ministers today. Copan's (2010) reflects on the purpose of spiritual direction as intentionally modelling and influencing a person's development of life with God and God's purposes. He sees the Biblical figure of the apostle Paul as an inspirational, 'imitate-me', model of discipleship and ministry (Copan, 2010). A different approach to inspirational modelling is articulated in Carr's Doctor of Ministry Thesis (2015) in the context of conflict, anxiety and pain following a congregational split. He details a three-phase transformation via a new healing and reconciliation mimetic embodied in a congregation's fresh reconciliation narrative (Carr, 2015). The formation of mimetic virtue – the mind of Christ – in congregational community is explored by Uffman (2014). In a directly relevant comment from the discipline of practical theology, Herdt (2012, p.225) asserts her view of

a Christian ethic of mimetic virtue, virtue acquired by being conformed to Christ and imitating virtuous human exemplars. This takes place in a process in which both divine and human agency are fully at work, as we are attracted by the beauty of exemplars in a way which energises our agency and ultimately are drawn into a process of being re-formed in the image of God in a way which fits us for common fellowship with God.

Seeing formation as a new, mimetic learning illustrates the influence of mimesis as a concept within the discipline of practical theology and originating in Girard's (1976) initial literary and subsequent increasingly theological studies (Girard, 2001). The concept of mimetic desire and human development continues to fascinate (Kirwan, 2009) and be applied in theological approaches including how human beings are taken up into the new creation in a restorative rather than destructive desiring according to the desires of another (Alison, 2003).

In this section, mentoring as a means to ministerial formation has been reviewed within its context of practical theology. Exemplarity and modelling are understood to be important in developing a minister's character, both within and beyond formal mentoring. There is growing interest in theological accounts of the interdisciplinary concept of mimesis but the actual process of mimetic formation (for example the attractiveness and identification with a model exemplar and their goals and attitudes) remains undeveloped.

## 2.5. Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature relating to mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. It has demonstrated the requirement for an interdisciplinary approach drawing from relevant studies and articles from literature on *modelling in mentoring*, *mimetic learning* and a practical theology of *Baptist ministerial formation*. There is a gap in research that explores how modelling works in mentoring. There is a scarcity of studies exploring connections between mentoring outcomes like character formation and relational leadership and modelling. Some of this gap in explanatory processes for modelling outcomes may be provided through psychological and philosophical studies that indicate contributory factors in the processes of mimetic learning, imitation, modelling and exemplarity. There is a gap in studies that investigate rather than simply refer to learning processes in mentoring. In the specific framework of ministerial formation other 'spiritual' dynamics are often assumed although faith community ways of speaking do not mean that the identities and attitudes within one religious grouping are necessarily monochrome or predictable (Power, 2013).

The positioning of mimetic effect in mentoring in this review has concentrated on the directly relevant material of practical theological research and the literature of ministerial formation and social learning theory. Imitative modelling straddles social learning, ministerial theology, mentoring research and literature. Exemplarity, modelling, imitation and 'mimetic' are overlapping concepts and keywords that occur in the ministerial formation accounts of practical theology but without research into or explanation of the dynamics.

The commonality of these keywords across the areas of this review suggest a possible conceptual framework for exploring the gaps (see Figure 2.2). The concept of mimetic effect is rooted in an interdisciplinary understanding. Such understanding is drawn from literature and studies into imitation, exemplarity, and modelling within the areas of ministerial formation, mentoring and mimetic learning. The focus of the study is to analyse and explore themes arising from participating ministers' *own* experiences and explanations of mimetic effect in mentoring to identify and understand the dynamics. By evaluating the results and convergence, fresh explanation concerning the dynamics and potential of mimetic effect in mentoring can be generated which has application to the formation of Baptist ministers and also theoretical and practical transferability for others in the field of mentoring and mimetic learning.

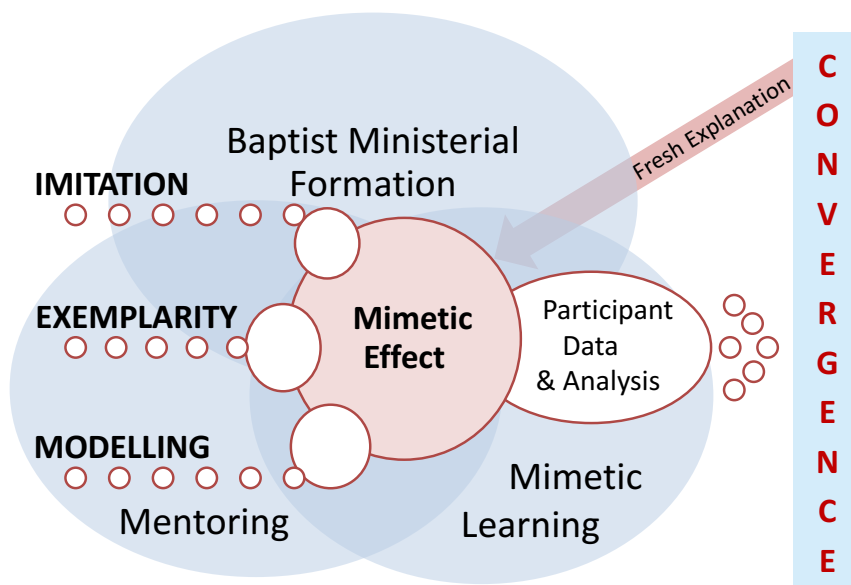


Figure 2.2 Conceptual framework showing contribution to gap in existing research

## Chapter Three: Methodology

The methodology described in this chapter was designed to identify and build a 'best fit' explanation of mimetic effect in the mentoring of Baptist ministers in accordance with the following critical realist assumptions.

### 3.1 Critical realist philosophy

My critical realist philosophical assumptions have been informed by a progressive orthodox Christian faith understanding of the nature of reality (ontology) as determinative of epistemology. This ontology has assumed both that there is a reality "out there" independent of observers, and also that the world is socially constructed but only partly so (Easton, 2010). In engaging with constructivist reactions to positivism I have taken seriously the influence of context and constructionism. I am, however, also drawn to the possibility of provisional truth, even in the social sphere. My epistemological position has been influenced by a critical realist ontology as a 'best fit' to my understanding of the way things are and the manner and degree to which we can know. There is a world, a reality, that exists beyond our ways of knowing and our understanding, beyond but including what is constructed (Schilbrack 2014).

As human beings and the universe are in the *process* of becoming there is also a *process* of knowing. This position has been stimulated and clarified by fresh engagement with the scientist-theologian and critical realist John Polkinghorne, who is known for the concept *epistemology models ontology* (1995). Openness towards and revisability of knowledge claims is important, but there may still be correspondence with admittedly difficult-to-know reality on the way. Like Polkinghorne, though without his scientific credentials, I have been influenced by a faith position which engages with what is being understood about the nature of the universe and seeks to integrate this with theology that is provisional, acknowledges *ways of speaking* and some *givens*. This progressive philosophical, theological and orthodox view seeks to take account of all sources of information. This includes a view of God as Triune, relational, engaging with human beings and the universe in loving and life-enabling ways. These ways are discovered in and through Christ the image of God and exemplar of human becoming. God has 'inputted' and continues to 'input' into this open universe which is in a continuous process of becoming.

This critical realist and process-oriented approach has meant that all possible investigations into 'what is' are significant. The way things are - complex, many faceted, multi-caused and

explained – has parallels in the manner in which we know. On this view, the importance of ‘rich’ data has been that it provides variety and detail for a fuller illumination of both descriptive content and of processes in phenomena being investigated (Maxwell, 2012, p.43). A full as possible complement of theory, testing, description, experience, interpretation (‘data’) have been needed to approach accuracy. Any revision that is needed does not mean that the whole is simply a construction. Unlike empirical realism which identifies the real with what we can experience, in critical realism, what is the case and what we know are closely aligned. There can be a retroductive move from experience to ask about underlying structures and mechanisms that may account for phenomena, but they are not identical (Sayer, 2000, p.11; McEvoy and Richards, 2006 p.71). Research into the human experience of mimetic effect can add further daubs to the overall canvas of understanding and insight into mentoring. The idea is to uncover multiple strands to, and perspectives on, reality rather than multiple constructed realities (Maxwell 2012).

Critical realism, sometimes known as transcendental or complex realism, was first outlined in Britain by Roy Bhaskar in the 1970’s and has developed into a philosophical stance in research (Bhaskar, 2008). It is a position between positivism and constructivism which seeks to recognise the possibility of knowledge independent of human thought and language but also the socially influenced and provisional nature of scientific enquiry. Critical realism is an ontological position which holds that there is an objective reality comprising actual events and real underlying causes though these can only be perceived and understood fallibly and therefore uncertainly (Clark, 2008). The difficulty of achieving objective knowledge is acknowledged but there is a reality behind and independent of the accuracy of our ability to perceive, understand, theorise or model (Horvoka and Germonprez, 2008). The epistemic fallacy that epistemology swallows up ontology to the extent that beliefs about the world trump any and every possible reality is resisted (Archer, Collier and Porpora, 2004, p.2). In critical realism there is acknowledgment that the world is in part socially constructed. The standpoint is between a naive realism that assumes reality can be fully accessed and a social constructivism that believes the world is entirely constructed.

According to the principles of applied critical realism with its emphasis on the possibility of independent reality, conceptualising (Sayer, 2000, p.27) the phenomenon of mimetic effect has been important before following up with rigorous description and rich, deep explanation of patterns and connections identified in the mentor-mentee interview data. Other perspectives from field expert interviews and from the quantitative survey data have been able to corroborate or provide additional explanation of mimetic effect.



Evidence-based, critical realism avoids rushing into a reductionist approach to understanding and explaining mimetic effect. In this way it has allowed a deep understanding of the patterns in mimetic effect potentially enabling transferability (Morgan, 2007). Potential transferability includes the sharing and possible application of any explanatory mechanisms in mentoring beyond the case study area of Baptist ministers. The purpose has been to help create more accurate explanations of the social phenomenon of mimetic effect in mentoring than currently are available in research studies or theoretical literature and other discussions that mention mimetic or imitative or role-modelling effect (Edwards, O'Mahoney and Vincent, 2014 p.13). These explanations can then be further studied and tested (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Easton suggests that a critical realism case-study approach is particularly well-suited to relatively clear, bounded but complex phenomena. (2010). Analysis of a small number of mentoring relationships in the bounded organisational environment (Flyvbjerg, 2006) of Baptist ministers in a defined geographical area has yielded a large amount of data for analysing and building up a picture of the dynamic of mimetic effect in mentoring (Easton 2010). The aim has been to find explanations of mimetic effect that are most consistent with the data. Critical realism is well-suited to a case study in which I have sought an in-depth understanding of why mimetic effect happens as it does (Easton, 2010). It has provided a paradigm for handling a complex set of factors and relationships within the social phenomenon of mimetic effect (Easton, 2010) and a methodology able to address 'how' and 'why' questions in this unexplored research area (Eisenhardt 2007).

Case study research, with its small number of participants and bounded context can be criticised for lack of generalisability. Explanations for mimetic effect are 'analytic generalizations' (Yin 2014, p.40) generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to wider populations as though they were based in empirical research. From a critical realist perspective, expansion and generalisation has come from an explanation based in analysing deep processes contextually understood through particular mechanisms (Easton, 2010). Although connections to existing theory are important, the lack of current theory explaining mimetic effect in mentoring has meant that a highly specific case study of Baptist ministers has been enough to start the process of theory creation (Easton 2010). 'The theory-building process occurs via recursive cycling among the case data, emerging theory, and later, extant literature' (Eisenhardt 2007 p.25). This context specific case study has not sought to arrive at universal predictive theory in the sphere of social learning and individual human development but rather to usefully contribute to the currently limited knowledge

about the process of mimetic effect (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The revelatory possibility of a small sample has been maximised by selecting participants who have strongly indicated the possible presence of mimetic effect according to theoretical expectations and who have looked likely to be especially helpful sources of rich and deep information (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The qualitative element of this case study research can also be criticised for its subjectivity. This bias towards verification – finding what the researcher wants to find - is an issue in all research choices (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The need for rigour in case study methodology includes the intentional advantage of proximity to reality: real-life situations and views practically interrogate any preconceived ideas (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This has been addressed at phase two of the data collection stage by interviewing the mentee first, followed by a separate interview with his or her mentor. This approach has enabled a comparison of accounts of indications and explanations of mimetic effect within each dyad. A further comparison has taken place by comparing data across dyads at an initial stage of pattern matching prior to drafting semi-structured interviews for further data collection (information and perspectives) from field experts. At the data analysis stage, theoretical indications of mimetic effect for each mentee indicated in their survey answers has been compared with their interview answers (Yin, 2014). Pattern matching of *explanations* of mimetic effect across the dyads – but without overlooking solitary alternative ones – have also been ways of increasing confidence in interpretations (Salminen, 2006).

### 3.2 Methodological choices

Critical realist philosophical assumptions have informed the choice of a mixed method case-study - the collection of relevant quantitative data followed by the collection of qualitative data (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2009). Critical realism is compatible with a range of research methods, but the particular choice to use a mixed-methods case-study approach has been to maximise the possibility of gaining understanding and insights into the mechanism of mimetic effect (Sayer, 2000 p.19). The flexibility of this case study has meant that multiple sources of data have been obtained using both quantitative and qualitative methods enabling the building of multiple perspectives of mimetic effect.

A critical realist approach has given primacy to being led by reality – the actual and real events under investigation. A research goal has been to trace causality abductively, that is by finding the movement from events to their causes. The most fundamental purpose of critical realism is explanation, to ask, what causes a phenomenon to happen (Easton, 2010). Through a mixed-methods case-study approach a rich but multi-perspective array of

participant-reported data has been obtained as the basis for building possible explanations with a view to finding a best-fit. Unlike grounded theory which attempts to set aside prior concepts and theory in investigating a phenomenon, in this critical realist case-study a retroductive approach has meant moving backwards from indications of mimetic effect to ask what might have caused it, being open to existing concepts and new ones (Easton 2010).

Critical realism is only partly naturalist – interpretive understanding has also been important (Sayer, 2000, p.17). There have been a number of strengths in taking this approach for the *qualitative* data part of this case study. One of these has been the willingness to engage with and embrace the complexity inherent in researching a little-studied abstract mechanism underlying the phenomenon of mimetic effect. Another has been the commitment to identify, understand and explain patterns in the interview data. A third has been the recognition of constructivist ‘reality’ - that humans can actively shape, influence and be affected by social and cultural assumptions and values, and that this has been present in the interview data in this study (Clark, 2008).

A case study approach has been chosen to enable a relatively small number of instances of the phenomenon of mimetic effect to be studied in depth via interviews with Baptist minister mentees and their mentors. The case boundary has been that of Baptist ministers in the south and west of England. I have been interested in descriptive/interpretive questions about mimetic effect, and its nature, and, as befits a critical realist study, identifying possible causal mechanisms. A choice has been made to use the quantitative part of a survey as part of the case study primarily to enable the selection of ministers - mentees and mentors – to approach for in-depth interviews. Purposive selection has been on the basis of theoretical indications of mimetic effect. The survey has also provided contextual information concerning the participants. In order to obtain information to improve provision of mentoring to Baptist ministers, the survey contained three open-ended questions asking for qualitative responses about historic choices for and aspirations concerning mentoring relationships.

Other approaches to researching mimetic effect could have been grounded theory - allowing explanations about mimetic effect to freely emerge. As a researcher, however, I have been drawing on some definite theoretical strands in my investigation though remaining open to fresh theory emerging. Another approach could have been Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA, however, would not have fitted within a critical realist ontology and epistemology seeking to go beyond the personal meaning of the

phenomenon of mimetic effect to gain some causal explanation of its mechanism through multiple sources. A case study approach has allowed a close view and exploration of the phenomenon of mimetic effect (Flyvbjerg, 2006 p.235). A mixed-methods case study methodology in three phases of data collection has allowed the collection of evidence of mimetic effect and the possibility of making inferences about this phenomenon (Maxwell, 2012).

As fresh theory for mimetic effect has emerged during research, case study methodology has allowed the possibility of full and intensive research using mixed methods and multiple confirmatory sources, each interpreted via several theoretical strands to build explanation (Easton, 2010). In this study it has been necessary to choose an explanation building rather than a theory testing approach because there is no existing theory that offers a feasible explanation of mimetic effect (Eisenhardt, 2007, p.26). This critical realist case study methodology has looked at the contributions of interactions of participant interpretations and of causal structures or mechanisms. (Wynn, 2012). This approach has used a variety of sources of data and drawn on or adapted existing theoretical explanations from several disciplines. In researching this mimetic mechanism, which has a range of possible psychological and spiritual explanations, it has been important to be free to choose a case-study approach which can yield a rich and strong array of data using mixed methods without compromising the integrity of each (Willig, 2008, p357).

### 3.3 Case study context

The scope of this case study has been an inquiry into the contemporary phenomenon of mimetic effect *within* the real-world context of mentoring Baptist ministers (Yin, 2014). The Baptist Union of Great Britain comprises around 2000 churches with over 1600 fully and newly accredited ministers. These churches and their ministers are spread across England and Wales in thirteen geographical Associations. Trainee ministers are usually formed at one of the five Baptist Colleges in England and Wales. Following 'a call' to a local church, new ministers embark on three to four years of further formation while in their first post. These ministers, known as Newly Accredited Ministers (NAMs), must fulfil a number of requirements during their probationary time: a learning contract overseen by a Baptist College; participation in a number of theological reflection sessions organized and overseen by their Association through the regional ministry team; mentoring by an experienced and trained local minister, usually identified and arranged by the Association regional ministry team (BUGB, 2018). When a NAM completes this period of further formation they become a fully accredited minister on the Baptist Union List of Nationally Accredited Ministers

(BUGB, 2017). Once fully accredited, a minister sometimes arranges to continue working with their NAM mentor beyond the requirement to do so. Other ministers bring their working relationship with that mentor to an end, and in time arrange voluntarily to set up another mentoring relationship. Some simply choose to pursue support and development through other means.

As Figure 3.1 shows below, the research took place in planned phases. The first phase was the literature review. This revealed the gap in studies into mimetic effect in mentoring. Reviewing studies and discussions around the key terms of imitation, exemplarity and modelling in the literature of mentoring, mimetic learning (social learning) and ministerial formation (Baptist and wider) indicated the expected features of mimetic effect. These expected features informed the design of the second phase, a quantitative survey. The purpose of this was twofold: to obtain information about mentoring experiences and to identify interview participants on the basis of indications of mimetic effect according to theoretical expectations. In phase three, semi-structured interviews were undertaken individually with mentees who had indicated mimetic effect and then, also, with each of their mentors thus enabling corroboration and new information. In phase four, further semi-structured interviews were undertaken with experienced mentoring practitioner-trainers to gain further perspectives on surface-layer themes found in the minister mentee and mentor interview data. These multiple forms of data have provided methodological triangulation, adding to the quality of this case-study (Roulston, 2010, p.84).

My awareness of a paucity of research into mimetic effect in mentoring generally and specifically in the formation of Baptist ministers led me to begin with a literature review. This review served to identify and build an interdisciplinary understanding of elements that potentially contribute to mimetic effect. This interdisciplinary understanding informed the construction of a survey that could identify suitable interviewees who displayed strong indications of mimetic effect according to theoretical expectations. Basing the survey on theoretical expectations regarding mimetic effect provided opportunity to confirm the design of this instrument. The priority was to identify the presence of mimetic effect in participants in order to explore and study the process and my choice was to survey a large sample of the population of Baptist ministers and to purposively select participants. In building an explanation for a relatively unresearched phenomenon it was considered important to interview participants with strong indications of mimetic effect for the qualitative phases of the study which maximised the possibility of developing explanatory factors in this effect

rather than testing a prior theory (Eisenhardt, 2007). This has led to the development of theory and a model which could be tested quantitatively and/or qualitatively.

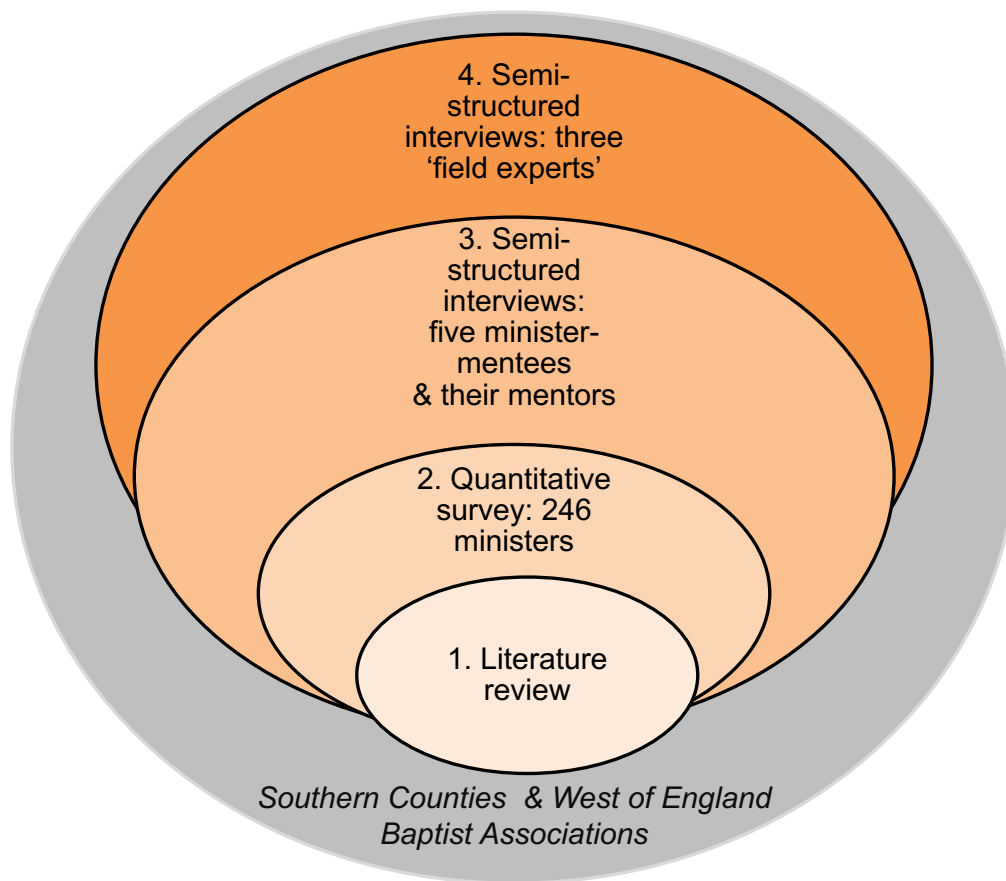


Figure 3.1 Diagram of phased research process

### 3.4 Participants and selection

The size of this population (1600 Baptist ministers) required a sampling process given that a critical factor has been the amount of available time to achieve the research plan. In order to achieve this, the total population of active ministers in two neighbouring regional Baptist Associations was selected for an online quantitative survey (Appendix 1). This was a source of descriptive data regarding context and also for identifying mentees indicating mimetic effect in mentoring. Two regional Associations (out of a total of thirteen nationally) comprising 246 ministers (out of approximately 1600 nationally) were selected. Theoretical sampling addressed the problem regarding the challenge of representation of a large

population and has also fulfilled a research purpose which is to develop theory by selecting cases that are particularly appropriate for illuminating causal strands in the phenomenon of mimetic effect (Eisenhardt 2007). Participants for the study were drawn from two of the thirteen Baptist Associations with every minister in each of these Associations being invited to respond to an online survey. A total of 246 ministers were invited by email to participate in this initial survey. The purpose of the survey was, firstly, to gather demographic and contextual information about these ministers (see Table 3.1, below). Information was sought about gender, age range, and also included the number of mentors worked with in order to develop their approach to leadership and ministry, and where applicable, the reasons for choosing not to seek a mentor beyond their NAMs period, together with the benefits of mentoring to their development as a minister.

Mentee Respondents		Age group					Years as minister				No. of mentors during ministry			
		25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	1-5	6-10	11-19	20+	1	2	3	4+
Male	62 79%	4 6%	12 19%	22 35%	21 34%	3 5%	13 21%	11 18%	19 31%	19 31%	27 45%	24 40%	5 8%	4 7%
Female	16 21%	1 6%	2 12%	7 44%	6 38%	0	9 56%	2 13%	3 19%	2 13%	9 56%	5 31%	1 6%	1 6%
Total (Male + Female)	78	5 6%	14 18%	29 37%	27 35%	3 4%	22 28%	13 17%	22 28%	21 27%	36 47%	29 38%	6 8%	5 7%

Table 3.1 Survey participants - contextual information

Purposive selection of participants for interview using the survey data was based in a theoretical sampling according to my understanding at that time of indications of mimetic effect from relevant literature. The intention was to identify potential interviewees with whom to further explore these possible indications of mimetic effect through in-depth interviews (Maxwell, 2012, p. 94). Purposive selection of five interviewees was made from mentee-respondents who expressed willingness to participate further and took into account evidence indicating relevant theoretical expectations regarding mimetic effect in mentoring ministers. In this way interviewees were found who could provide rich, in-depth data in regard to mimetic effect (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 173). This was followed by five in-depth interviews with mentee ministers. The mentors of such mentees gave permission

both for an interview to take place with their mentee and to participate in their own interview, effectively identified via their mentees in a 'snowballing' method.

78 ministers answered the survey (out of 246 – a 32% response rate). Of these

- 62 answered questions within the survey relating to their experience of a mentor either less than or more than 5 years ago and/or voluntarily mentoring arranged subsequent to full accreditation
- 16 respondents chose not to answer items relating to their experience of a mentor either less than or more than 5 years ago and/or voluntarily arranged subsequent to full accreditation
- 25 expressed willingness to be available for an interview on their experience of mentoring by providing a contact email address
- 7 of those willing to be interviewed had no current or recent (less than two years) experience of working with a mentor and were ruled out on the basis of potential recall distortions (Bradburn et al,1987)
- 3 were current newly accredited ministers within SCBA (my own Association) who it was not considered appropriate to approach because I make a contribution to the final decision about their approval for full accreditation.

Fifteen potential interviewees remained. These were ranked according to analysis of answers to questions which, according to theoretical expectations, might be expected to indicate mimetic effect i.e. indications of a possible modelling effect from mentor to mentee and the reproducing of a mentor's attitudes, values and behaviour. For these fifteen respondents, survey questions about their most recent experience of a mentor (whether an allocated NAM mentor, q. 5, or a voluntarily arranged mentor, q. 7, see Appendix 1), were scored 1-6 with 'disagree strongly' being allocated a '1' and 'agree strongly' a '6'. Selection for interview was based on a ranking of accumulated scores for indications of mimetic effect, with participation in interview being invited from the highest five respondent scores. The score for q. 9: 'Mentoring (whether allocated or self-chosen) has been of benefit to my development as a minister by providing...a model of how to be a minister' was used as a tie-breaker. These respondents were contacted to arrange an interview according to the order of this ranking. A participant information and consent form were sent together with a request for permission for their current/recent mentor's contact details for gaining consent to also interview them. Participation by each interviewed mentee's mentor in their own semi-structured interview was designed to widen and deepen understanding of the mentee's reported experience. If, after being contacted for an interview, a respondent no longer



wished to participate, or their mentor was not willing to participate in an interview, the next highest scoring respondent was approached until five mentees and their mentors agreed to be interviewed. Contextual information about mentee-interviewees is shown in Table 3.2.

5 Mentee Interviewees		Age group					Years as minister				No. of mentors during ministry			
		25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	1-5	6-10	11-19	20+	1	2	3	4+
Male	4		1	2	1			1	3			4		
Female	1			1			1				1			
Total (Male + Female)	5		1	3	1		1	1	3		1	4		

Table 3.2 Mentee interviewee information

In order to gain additional perspectives, a final phase comprised arranging interviews with experienced field practitioners. Participants were recruited by approaching a range of possible interviewees from a limited network of specialist Christian leadership mentoring organisations and experienced mentoring trainer/practitioners professionally involved in the provision of mentoring and training for ministers and church leaders. Eleven invitees were sourced through researching Christian leadership/ministry mentoring networks and through following up on my own existing knowledge of people and organisations. Of these, three were willing to be interviewed.

### 3.5 Data collection

Figure 3.1 (above) outlines planned phases in the research process of data collection. The following data was collected from four sources across three phases:

- survey sent to 246 ministers in two Associations (SCBA and WEBA)
- a semi-structured interview with each of five purposively selected mentees
- a semi-structured interview with the mentor from the dyad of each of five mentees
- a semi-structured interview with each of three field experts in mentoring Christian leaders and ministers

Data collection took place between January and August 2016 in three phases: Survey (January-February); interviews with mentees and subsequently their mentors (April-June); field experts (August-September).

#### 3.5.1 Phase one: Survey

In phase one, a quantitative descriptive organisational survey (Appendix 1) was designed and sent to 246 ministers in Southern Counties Baptist Association (SCBA) and the West of England (WEBA). The survey was piloted with five Baptist ministers from other Baptist Associations, four of whom filled it in and two of whom gave feedback. The initial survey was an online *SurveyMonkey* sent to every minister in two Baptist Associations (of thirteen nationally). The survey was sent by the administrative offices via a link within a covering email from the Southern Counties Baptist Association (SCBA – to 146 ministers) and West of England Baptist Association (WEBA – to 100 ministers). Access was formally agreed by the Trustees of each Association. Filling in the survey indicated consent to participate and was anonymous unless the respondent indicated preparedness to engage with further research by providing contact details.

The survey asked the participants to reflect on aspects of their experience of mentoring and its effects as a NAM, and, where applicable, in any subsequent self-chosen mentoring relationship. Participants were asked to respond on three aspects of their experience of mentoring and its effects by answering closed-ended questions about how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements using a 6-point Likert interval scale (Disagree strongly/moderately/slightly-Agree slightly/moderately/strongly). The first of these aspects asked about their sense of *connection* - with the mentor as a person, with their facilitation of the mentoring meeting, and with their approach to ministry. The second aspect focused on *role-model effect* – how strongly they agreed that they aspired to be like their mentor in the

way that they approached ministry and saw their mentor at that time as a positive role model. The third aspect built on this area with four statements about *positive mentor-to-mentee effect* on relating to other people, engaging in ministry tasks, sensing God's presence and participating in God's purposes. A further reverse-worded statement was used in this section enabling participants to indicate strength of agreement or disagreement that their mentor had *negatively* affected their own values, attitudes or behaviour. In focusing on these three aspects, the survey questions were designed to provide data and understanding needed for pursuing the research question in greater depth through face to face interviews (Maxwell, 2012). The survey comprised real questions throughout, including some that were useful for understanding the wider contextual situation regarding mentoring among Baptist ministers.

As well as being one source in building contextual background for explanation of mimetic effect, one planned outcome of the survey was to enable selection of current (or recent) mentoring dyads for semi-structured interviews seeking to further identify and understand the dynamics of mimetic effect. This was by seeking to identify indications of mentor-to-mentee modelling and influence in the experience of mentees who responded to the survey and who expressed willingness to engage in further research. Theoretical sampling rather than random or stratified was appropriate because the study-aim was to develop explanation rather than testing it (Eisenhardt, 2007, p.27).

### 3.5.2 Phase two: Mentee and mentor interviews

To select participants for interview, an initial survey was planned which included questions with 6-point (ensuring no mid-point fence-sitting option) Likert-scale answers focused on indicating the presence of attitudes, values and behaviour found to be in common between (and flowing from) mentor to mentee. The survey was an initial source of data for purposively selecting respondents for phase two of the data collection process: primary qualitative in-depth interviews with five mentees and their current mentors. These in-depth interviews with five ministers explored the context of each mentee and in subsequent separate interviews, that of their mentor, as well as their mentoring relationship and indications of and their perceptions of explanatory mechanisms regarding mimetic effect (Maxwell, 1992). Interviews with their five mentors provided further perspectives as well as corroborative data information. Additional interviews with expert practitioners in the field of mentoring Christian leaders further enriched the exploration of context and explanatory mechanisms (Maxwell, 1992). Interviews with mentors took place on a different and later date than that of their respective mentees. All the semi-structured interviews with mentors

had the same broad outline (see Appendix 4) but opportunity was also taken to follow-up some mentee-reported information and themes. All interviews were conducted and, where appropriate, initially and iteratively analysed for follow-up, within an interpretive framework as befits qualitative data.

The interview questions were constructed by drawing on the survey and the theoretical expectations regarding mimetic effect arising from the literature review and which had already informed the survey questionnaire. Questions were chosen which enabled the interviewee to reflect on the relevant area without being presented directly with my research question (Maxwell, 2012). I did not undertake a pilot interview with any available mentees. I drew on considerable experience of interviewing people in my professional role because purposive selection of possible participants resulted in a very limited number of mentee-mentor dyads available to participate.

The first set of questions to mentees (Appendix 3) built on the survey responses which had concentrated on indications of strength of agreement in three main aspects (see Appendix 1 for the survey questionnaire). Each mentee was invited to answer 'in what ways' they *connected with*, *aspired to be like/saw as a model*, and were *practically affected by* their mentor in their approach to others, ministry, God's presence and purposes. For example, 'In what ways do you connect with your mentor's approach to ministry?' 'In what ways would you describe your mentor as a role model?' 'In what ways has your mentor affected your sense of God's presence?' These were alignment questions which allowed more in-depth answers at this interview stage than was possible at the survey stage (Scott, 2007).

The second set of questions to mentees explored prior commonalities and also changes and developments in the mentee's attitudes and priorities regarding life, faith and ministry as a result of relating to their mentor. For example, 'What attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry do you sense you already had in common with your mentor before you began to meet with them?' 'What attitudes or priorities about life faith and ministry particularly seem to have developed through relating to your mentor?'

A third set of questions asked about the mentees' own explanation of the changes or developments in their own attitudes and priorities, including a check question that asked about factors beyond their mentoring relationship which might have contributed to this effect. For example, 'What has your mentor *intentionally* said or done to encourage these

attitudes or priorities to develop in you?’ What have you seen or experienced in your mentor that might explain the development of these attitudes or priorities?’

Semi-structured interviews with each mentee’s mentor occurred in a different venue and on a later date (see Appendix 4 for a list of mentor semi-structured interview questions). The three sets of questions exactly mirrored those used with their mentee. By interviewing the mentor of each dyad in this way, complementary perspectives were obtained regarding explanations of possible processes as well as corroboration of details provided by their mentee (Maxwell, 2012).

The interviews were audio-recorded and expected to last up to an hour. Some notes were made as each interview proceeded and immediately afterwards. These notes, together with those made during the hard work of transcription, provided close initial engagement with the data. The purpose of the in-depth interviews with mentees was to dig deeper into the strong indications of modelling and imitative effect between them and their mentor in their survey responses. It was important to hear the details and perspectives of a number of mentees to build up and eventually interpret the patterns of experience. It was also important to explore each mentee’s own perceptions of the modelling influence that had been indicated in his or her survey responses to gain a rich description of mimetic effect and to gather possible explanatory indications of the process. Subsequent interviews with each respective mentor explored any reported or possible reproducing of attitudes, values and behaviour from them to their mentee and the mentor’s own perspective on this dynamic.

Spiritual explanations from Christian ministers required careful handling of dualistic tendencies by participants to reduce mentor influence, and attitudinal and behavioural development to a solely spiritual narrative. This necessitated gentle but dogged questioning that, wherever possible, invited the interviewee to describe effects in *this-and-and* language (for example, God doing something *and* human psychological *and* sociological mechanisms).

### 3.5.3 Phase three: Field expert interviews

Further interviews took place with three experienced practitioner/trainers involved more widely in mentoring ministers to explore emerging themes, context and explanatory mechanisms. (See Appendix 5 for a list of practitioner semi-structured interview questions). This third phase consisted of drawing on themes from across individual interviews with these mentees and their mentors to generate questions with mentoring field experts and

trainers to gain additional perspectives. The questions were divided into three areas. The first of these explored contextual information, for example their experience and understanding of mentoring, and their model or approach. A second area explored mimetic effect in their own experience of being mentored: evidence of and reflections on transmission to or from them of attitudes, values, and ways of behaving. The third area invited them to comment on themes identified as potentially important in the process of mimetic effect from initial analysis of interviews with mentees and mentors undertaken in the second phase of data collection. These themes included 'a wide basis for trust' (lots in common), 'mentee openness' (arising from struggle and need), 'the mentee's desire for or expectation of growth', 'the level of exposure to the mentor's values and struggles', 'the relating-style of the mentor including going beyond professional requirements', and finally 'shared perspectives on God and ministry.'

### 3.6 Data analysis

The initial questionnaire was sent to all of the 246 active ministers ranging in age from 25 to 70 currently in Southern Counties Baptist Association (SCBA) and West of England Baptist Association (WEBA). A desirable response number of 30-50 would have given sufficient scope for analysis, and enough potential participants to select from for interviews (phase two, described below). Newly Accredited Ministers (NAMs) from my own Association (SCBA) were in a three to four year process of moving to Full Accreditation based in part on their progress within their mentoring relationship and a report from me, their Association regional minister. For this reason NAMs from my own Association were not interviewed. The survey data in this case study has been analysed using descriptive statistical tools in SurveyMonkey software and SPSS. Manual analysis included the ranking of participants' Likert *strength of agreement* scores for questions relating to theoretically relevant indications of mimetic effect in order to purposely identify promising candidates for in-depth interview.

Thematic Analysis (TA) has been used to analyse the qualitative interview data in this case study. This flexible and theoretically-free method was identified as being particularly appropriate and useful for a critical realist commitment to identifying descriptive and explanatory strands within and across multiple sources of information. The selection of a TA approach facilitates reflection of and unpicking of 'reality' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 81) and was a process partly but not wholly socially constructed (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Using thematic analysis for organizing, describing and interpreting the qualitative data part of this study has been a flexible method found to be compatible with a critical realist,

contextualist, approach which has sought to report and also interpret the experiences, meanings and reality of the participants (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

One of the advantages of TA was its theoretical freedom and flexible approach in being adapted for this critical realist study. The flexibility of approach and method can also be a disadvantage as the lack of structure and groundedness in a clear epistemological position can lead to inconsistency and incoherence (Nowell et al, 2017). A critical realist approach was used to determine appropriate categories, make connections among these categories, tell the story of mimetic effect, and 'identify "conditional paths" linking actions with 'antecedents, conditions and consequences' (Maxwell, 2012, p.119). As befits a critical realist stance, applying TA methods has led to the possibility of building theories of the mimetic process within mentoring because the interview data and themes pointed to a relationship between mimetic effect and specific dynamics within and between a mentor and mentee.

The initial approach was to note patterned responses, meanings, insights and concepts that seemed relevant to a search for evidence of mimetic effect and possible explanatory conditions or factors during each interview (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Segments of data were coded according to whether they captured something of interest to the research question (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). This was repeated during the process of verbatim transcribing aided by 'Inqscribe' software, and again with each finished interview transcript. A further set of notes were made working across all mentee transcripts and this was repeated for all mentor transcripts. These notes were also the basis for constructing a list of substantive categories to be explored in subsequent field expert interviews alongside other topical questions that matched those used with mentees and mentors.

A third full reading of the entire data set of transcripts took place using qualitative data text software (Quirkos – see Appendix 6 for an example) as an aid to organising the large amount of textual data. This software was initially used as a simple tool to help determine further topics and categories. *Contextual* information, for example the relationship narrative, was 'binned' under topics like 'Origins' (of relationship) and 'Beyond meetings' (Maxwell, 2012). *Substantive* categories, staying close to the participants own words and concepts (emic), brought together participants' own responses, for example concerning elements of the mimetic dynamic between mentee and mentor ('Imitative desire'; 'Aspire to be like'). The software enabled a comparison of topics and categories across mentees within each dyad, across dyads, and across all interviewees (including the field practitioners). The codes for each dyad were collected in matrices to facilitate looking across interviews for each

concept. This made possible an iterative approach to identify commonalities and overlaps, to explore inter-connections between codes, and to identify and refine the codes. The approach used a systematic constant comparative method to look for units of information either with commonality of content to be included under a cover term - the similarity principle - or that which was different and distinctive - the contrast principle (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2009). After working through the transcripts to code the data, a comparison was made of each coded text with others already assigned to that category, in order to understand the theoretical features using interpretive memos and to further integrate codes into new categories (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2017).

As the categorisation and coding process proceeded I became frustrated with losing a sense of connection with the overall context (Maxwell, 2012) which, with my personality preference for the big picture, I find particularly challenging as well as a weakness in this approach. I compensated for this weakness and frustration by manually mapping the story of and contributory factors in each mentee's development in relation to their relationship with his or her mentor simply using post-it notes, coloured pens and flip-chart paper (see Appendix 6). This manual process resulted in gaining fresh energy and insight for the task of TA.

I took full responsibility for judging the relevance of a theme rather than being unduly swayed by its identified prevalence or, in Quirkos terminology, 'quirk' size (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In seeking to explore the phenomenon of mimetic effect, a further stage of analysis included pattern-matching between the codes and the data and scant existing theory about mimetic effect. Theoretical categories were developed which placed the coded data into a more general or abstract, theoretical framework. These represented my concepts and ideas as the researcher about what may be going on (etic). The coding approach has been abductive in responding to descriptive and explanatory patterns (Yin, 2014) in the data and expectations from relevant theory.



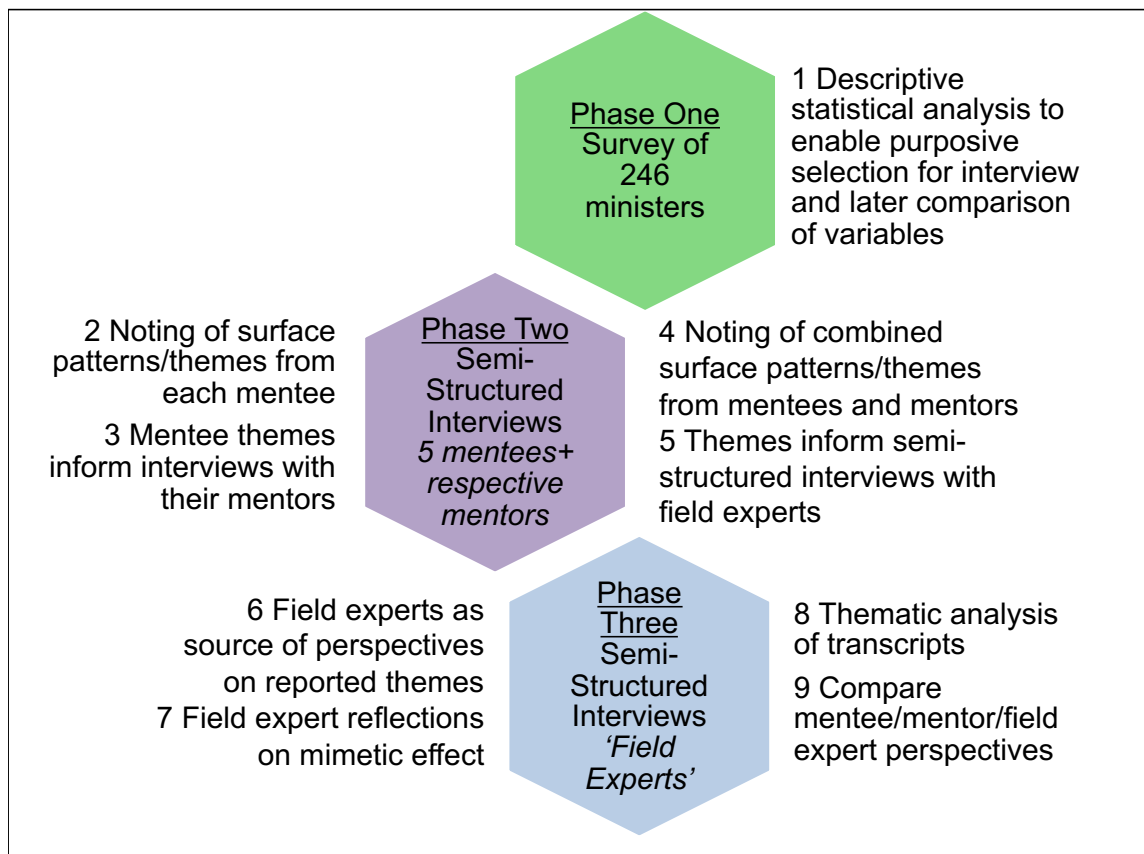


Figure 3.2 Data analysis process

The data analysis process is shown above (Figure 3.2). In summary, descriptive analysis of the survey (phase one, as shown in Figure 3.2) was followed by thematic analysis of in-depth interviews in phases two and three. The iterative sequential mixed data analysis was: Quan-Qual-Qual (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, pp. 277-278). An explanation-building (Yin, 2014, p.148) approach to data analysis proceeded alongside data collection. A cross-case comparison of themes and subsequent identification of patterns from the ten interviews informed the content of interviews with three field practitioner/trainers to gain further perspectives and comparisons via thematic analysis. The whole was analysed for indications of convergence or divergence in order to enable critical synthesis and to generate findings for use in the development through mentoring of Baptist ministers and also as insights into developing theory and a model of mimetic effect in the field of mentoring. Thematic analysis (data codes, aggregated categories and emerging themes) of mentee, mentor and field practitioner interview transcripts contributed to the findings. (Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Creswell, 2012). A qualitative data display (Table 5.1, p.72)

summarises the categorical and contextual themes identified and developed from this analysis (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2009).

### 3.7 Validity

The methodological validity of this study is that which is appropriate to a critical realist ontology and epistemology. There has been methodological triangulation via the use of mixed-methods research on this case study of mimetic effect in mentoring (Risjord, 2002). On one understanding of a critical realist paradigm, the quantitative and qualitative elements of this case study are complementary methods which can yield broad contextual information and in-depth rich data increasing confidence in the whole study. This blended view of methodological triangulation provides some amelioration of possible biases in the alternative method (Seale, 1999; Risjord, 2002). Triangulation has also been made possible through seeking multiple perceptions about the sought for reality – a value aware approach (Healy and Perry, 2000). Interviews of mentee and their mentor were conducted separately increasing rigour by enabling individual freedom to share views, experiences, perspectives and interpretations.

A core purpose of the survey was to identify the presence of mimetic effect according to theoretical expectations and most of the questions were designed specifically to obtain this information, ensuring face validity. Content validity was addressed by survey questions about all relevant areas of attitudes, values and perception potentially indicating mimetic effect. I am not aware as the researcher of any instruments specifically designed to identify or measure this and provide a construct validity comparison. In preparing the survey, however, reference was made to established instruments like the Mentoring Functions Questionnaire (MFQ-9) which includes three questions seeking to identify the presence of role-modelling (Scandura, 1993). The inclusion of other sorts of questions within the survey elicited contextual information about the participant alongside feedback regarding their experience of mentoring. This wider exploration of their mentoring relationship also functioned, therefore, in helping participants to recall their experiences. Clear explanations of the aim of the research and understandable questions were used, though reliability in regard to stability in the personal state of a person or in their setting (home, office, train) whilst filling in the online survey could not be guaranteed (Silverman, 2014).

The anonymity of an online survey asking questions of a mentee about, for example, aspiring to be like their mentor, was complemented by a face-to-face interview confirming/disconfirming the authenticity of the same topic areas whilst exploring the process in depth (Healy and Perry, 2000). The purpose was to build the most coherent

explanation of mimetic effect - a coherence model of theory structure and confirmation (Risjord, 2002).

Methodological trustworthiness via auditability (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) has been sought in a number of ways. For example, in careful descriptions of the process of conducting the study including in the construction of the survey, and in following procedures for the selection of participants. Preparation for interviews with mentees was helped by already having information regarding their survey response: some of the semi-structured questions (Appendix 3) sought to help interviewees enlarge on their survey responses. Interviews with mentors were conducted with knowledge of how each of their mentees had already responded to a complementary set of semi-structured questions (Appendix 4). A semi-structured approach (Appendix 5) seeking reflections on surface themes from mentee and mentor interviews was also used in interviewing field practitioners. The possible impact of being an insider-researcher was managed by being genuine, authentic and relating with warmth combined with a professional approach to setting up, explaining the purpose of, and conducting the interview. In this way rigour was sought (Casey and Murphy, 2009). Rigour in following interview guidelines included careful transcribing of the audio recordings with participants being provided with a copy of the transcript and invited to correct any perceived inaccuracies (Lincoln and Guba 1994).

Risjord (2002) outlines three virtues associated with triangulation: completeness (qualitative plus quantitative methods give a fuller account), abductive inspiration (dissonance in the accounts of the two methods invites further analysis or research), combining in confirmation of the most coherent theory (Risjord, 2002, p. 274). These virtues are also relevant to analysis of the multiple sources of data collection in this study within the qualitative method of interviewing three sources to gather information on mimetic effect. Themes from thematic analysis of the interview data have provided clues for a credible account of mimetic effect which is plausible to believe (Silverman, 2014). The resulting analytic generalisation of explanatory mechanisms is that which both fits and makes most sense of the data and its interpretation. The approach has been to be open to any demonstrably new theory or concept whilst also asking how it sits alongside or coheres with existing relevant theories (Healy and Perry, 2000).

### 3.8 Ethics

The main ethical concerns identified in this study particularly relate to my role as the researcher who is also the main instrument of the research (McLeod, 2015):

- Two-fold role as insider-researcher and regional minister
- Researcher biases
- The identity and well-being of participants

#### 3.8.1 Two-fold role as insider-researcher

Ethical issues made it necessary to gain permission for access to mentors and mentees with the approval of Southern Counties and also West of England Baptist Associations. Power relationship distortions had the potential to affect freedom to consent, and the extent and freedom to disclose by mentors. Disclosure by NAMS could have affected relationships potentially with their mentors about whom they disclosed information. So the purpose of the study was carefully and properly explained so that all stakeholders - the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB), my employer, Southern Counties Baptist Association (SCBA), West of England Baptist Associations (WEBA) and participant ministers - knew how it would be pursued as well as used. Consent – active and informed – was obtained from mentees and their mentors as well as further consent for follow-up interviews.

My regional minister role as trainer and allocator of mentors within SCBA has had the potential to complicate any research relationship with mentors who may feel vulnerable about their relationships and skills being scrutinised. Being known as a counsellor, trainer and spiritual accompanier could have also led people to become anxious about being analysed. All of this could have closed down the responses of the participant and/or provoked non-relevant ones. It has been important to engage in robust self-reflection combined with sticking to the semi-structured script and restating to myself and any interviewee at the start of an interview that my role is as researcher. This was particularly important because even after a careful process of purposive selection, the mentors of the mentees who agreed to be interviewed were each known to me through my previous and current roles. One of these mentors has been mentored by me and it was fascinating to find that clarity about my role with him as researcher and orientating the interview towards the focus of the research seemed to work well for me and for him as he responded very appropriately. Interviews were managed with clear confidentiality boundaries but also an explanation of the focus of the research implemented via carefully chosen questions concentrating on aspects relevant to mimetic effect rather than being free floating and emergent. This rigour also helped me to counter my personal background as a widely

interested 'professional' question asker and analyser and also helped me to resist the temptation to shift into counselling mode. The advantage of being an insider was not needing to have everything about the context and ways of speaking to be explained and it also enabled the building of rapport (Unluer, 2012).

The relatively flat Baptist theology and structure of church governance does not rule out the possibility of my role as a regional minister receiving increased relative status, with perceived power to act as a gatekeeper over opportunities to serve and progress in a minister's 'career'. These dynamics are likely to be more pronounced for Newly Accredited Ministers (NAMs) amongst whom I was researching and who have to fulfil certain in-service requirements including mentoring for final accreditation. There is no direct employment relationship between me as a regional minister and Association ministers, each of whom are office holders appointed by their own local and autonomous church. Any possible indirect effect on the accrediting process for Newly Accredited Ministers within my Association (SCBA) was minimized by excluding SCBA NAMs from the possibility of being selected for interview. It is acknowledged that participant responses might still have been distorted in order to please, maximise positive perceptions or minimise negative ones, particularly at interview stage. I ruled out obtaining data from ministers who were actually in the process of undertaking allocated mentoring as a NAM, so it was very useful to be able to interview one mentee who had very recently finished her probationary period.

Potential distortion was also managed in anticipation by purposively choosing mentees to interview who have something to tell about mimetic effect but who also seemed less likely to be affected by any seniority and power effect. I chose not to select a mentee for interview who I had previously encountered in a difficult situation through my role and who through the logic of purposive selection might otherwise have been approached. Potential distortion was also helpfully managed by surveying and interviewing mentees from a neighbouring Association which left me freer to work as a researcher with reduced power dynamics. Three of the five dyads that were interviewed came from WEBA rather than my own Association.

The presence of overlapping boundaries with fellow Baptist ministers has not included any organisational agenda which will distort either the research process or the freedom to publish actual conclusions. The study's immediate organisational usefulness may currently seem limited to colleagues but the benefits and usefulness are likely to be appreciated as findings, theory and a model are integrated into mentoring training material and events.

### 3.8.2 Researcher values and biases

There are a number of areas in which my experience, role and philosophical faith position could result in blind spots and self-deception in relation to my research project. One of these has been my counselling experience and tendency to draw on psychodynamic insights. This included the temptation to move into therapeutic mode, or to offer interpretations of what is being said within an actual interview rather than gather actual relevant data in responses to a carefully prepared set of pertinent questions. Focus and discipline were required to avoid offering too many interpretations within the interview. Some empathic summaries of what the interviewee seemed to be saying were checked to give room for expansion or correction. Interest in 'Girardian' (Girard, 1976, 2001) versions of mimetic effect meant it was necessary to stay aware of temptations to look for or lead the interviewee into exploring a 'desiring what another desires' mechanism. Awareness and discipline were helped by the use of an appropriate semi-scripted set of questions. As interviews have progressed it has been interesting to find that a Girardian concept of mimesis as patterning after another's desires within a rivalrous dynamic has seemed increasingly inadequate for a mentoring context. It is positive mimetic effect which I have been exploring in this study although I acknowledge that Girard sees mimetic desire as neutral with the possibility of creative and beneficial potential (Adams and Girard, 1993).

I have acknowledged a critical realist philosophical-faith position where all data sources can contribute to a provisional approximation of reality. Privileged for me among these, as acknowledged above, are some theological fundamentals about God, the nature of human becoming as well as how things are. My *this-and-and* approach in building a model of mimetic effect, including preference for the big picture and openness to several patterns, connections and explanations, has provided check and balance. I have had to ensure openness to theological and also other explanations by reading and drawing widely on a range of studies, particularly constructivist ones. This has been aided through supervision and participation in the DCaM community learning group who at one seminar reminded me of the importance of not over-compensating for my faith position by being too dismissive of the contribution of theological perspectives on mimetic effect!

### 3.8.3 Identity and well-being of participants

Psychological issues potentially triggered in interview have been addressed by concentrating on indications of perceived reproducing of a mentor's attitudes, values and behaviour. Questions explored the mentee's own most valued attitudes and priorities in

ministry, faith and behaviour, and the independent reporting of these by their mentor. Remaining focused on mimetic effect and interviewees' own explanations helped to avoid the interview becoming inappropriately supervisory or therapeutic. As principal investigator I needed to draw on my experience of operating as 'assessor' and 'referrer' rather than other experience in hands-on counselling mode.

The participant information sheet communicated important information designed to show that all reasonable steps would be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and their data, addressing legal issues and associated social, economic and psychological dynamics: 'Involvement is treated with the strictest confidentiality, and all information collected about any participant in this study will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations).' I audio-recorded the interview and then transcribed it. As part of transcription all written data was de-identified and a pseudonym allocated to each interviewee. Each participant was offered the opportunity to validate their transcript which they received within one month of the interview with two weeks to review it and suggest any amendments.

My employer's organisational trust in my personal integrity with an accompanying lack of desire to shape or scrutinise this study means that I have needed to demonstrate ethical rigour throughout. This has involved clearly explaining and documenting the full process to the BUGB Ministries Team and SCBA Trustees/Team Leader and outlining my approach to managing potential ethical challenges with ministers whilst also responding to any of their ethical concerns. Neither BUGB, SCBA nor partner Associations have their own formal ethical research guidelines, so following the Oxford Brookes Code of Practice for the Ethical Standards for Research Involving Human Participants and the process of gaining ethical approval from Oxford Brookes UREC has served all participants and stakeholders as well as me as researcher.

### 3.9 Summary

In this chapter, the selection of a mixed-methods case study methodology within my critical realist stance has been explained. The methodological design included a quantitative survey and qualitative sets of interviews to identify and collect data on mimetic effect in the mentoring of Baptist ministers seeking a rich, strong array of data sources to build best-fit explanation, while respecting the integrity of both methods. An iterative approach to analysing the data has been outlined, with descriptive and some inferential analysis of the survey responses and thematic analysis of the interview data. The steps in obtaining the data have been systematically described along with the process for

analysing and seeking to ensure its validity. The ways in which ethical considerations and my bias and position as an 'insider' have been addressed have also been described.



## Chapter Four: Quantitative analysis of the survey

This chapter summarises and discusses the relevant findings of the quantitative element and survey in this mixed-methods case study of mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. Additional descriptive charts and tables from the survey not used in this chapter can be seen in Appendix 2. The survey scoped widely enough to obtain other organisational information about mentoring within the two Baptist Associations. This provides some context (as was seen in Table 3.1 Survey participants - contextual information) but only survey information considered to be directly relevant to this study into mimetic effect will be discussed in this chapter.

The research approach has been to look for evidence of mimetic effect between mentor and mentee, defined as the reproducing of identifiable attitudes, values and behaviour. The first part of the chapter seeks to discover the presence of mimetic effect in the survey results and to analyse these indications.

A critical review of the literature relating to ministerial formation and mimetic effect in mentoring, psychological learning theories and applied theology led to theoretical expectations concerning variables associated with mimetic effect. In the second part of this chapter, therefore, statistical analysis using non-parametric distribution independent group analyses (two-sided Fisher's exact test on a 2x2 contingency table) was used to determine whether the survey responses show that there is an association between these sets of variables, *connection with aspiration and modelling*, and *connection with a positive impact on attitudes, values and behaviour*. This is particularly important for two reasons. First, participants for interview were selected by ranking respondents' strength of agreement with survey statements designed to indicate the presence of these variables based on theoretical expectations regarding mimetic effect. Second, the subsequent interviews in the qualitative part of this case-study were also conducted on this basis and focused on exploring these variables in greater depth.

Descriptive analysis of the survey for the purpose of obtaining participants for in-depth semi-structured interviews is discussed in the third part of this chapter. The survey responses in this case study have been analysed using descriptive statistical tools in SurveyMonkey and SPSS software in order to understand, explore and present the quantitative data (Bryman and Bell, 2007) that is relevant to mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. Some analysis proceeded iteratively in order to serve each stage of data collection, for example identifying the presence of mimetic effect and potential

causal factors in the experience of survey participants to facilitate selection of interview participants. Observed patterns in the data from interviewing mentees informed subsequent mentor interviews, and similarly themes from both of these were drawn on in mentor-practitioner interviews.

#### 4.1 Evidence of impact on mentee attitudes, values and behaviour

The survey (Appendix 1) asked the participants to reflect on aspects of their experience of mentoring and its effects as a newly accredited minister (NAM), and, where applicable, in any subsequent self-chosen mentoring relationship. By answering closed-ended questions respondents were able to indicate strength of agreement with statements using a 6-point Likert interval scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6).

The area of questioning asked about three sets of variables. First, their sense of *connection* - with the mentor as a person, with their facilitation of the mentoring meeting, and with their approach to ministry. Second, *role-model effect* – how strongly they agreed that they aspired to be like their mentor in the way that they approached ministry and saw their mentor at that time as a positive role model. The third set of variables built on this aspect with four statements about *positive mentor-to-mentee effect* on relating to other people, engaging in ministry tasks, sensing God's presence and participating in God's purposes. A reverse-worded statement was used in this section enabling participants to indicate strength of agreement or disagreement that their mentor had *negatively* affected their own values, attitudes or behaviour. In focusing on these areas the survey questions were designed to provide data and understanding needed for pursuing the research question in greater depth through subsequent face to face interviews (Maxwell, 2012).

The following three figures (4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) show a high level of agreement by mentees concerning the three sets of variables of connection with their mentor, aspiration to be like and/or modelling from their mentor, and a positive impact by their mentor on their behaviour.

Each figure (4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) shows the weighted average score (the average rating for each answer choice) for strength of agreement with the nine statements expected to be associated with mimetic effect for survey respondents regarding a Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) allocated mentor less than five (<5) years ago; more than five (>5) years ago; and a subsequent voluntarily arranged mentor. This was calculated using statistical software to analyse the Likert responses where  $w$  = weight of answer choice,  $x$  = response count for answer choice ( $x_1w_1 + x_2w_2 + x_3w_3 \dots x_nw_n \div$  the total number who answered that question). In addition to these nine variables the results of a negatively worded reverse check for mimetic effect is shown (i.e. the mentor having a negative effect on the mentee's values attitudes and behaviour).

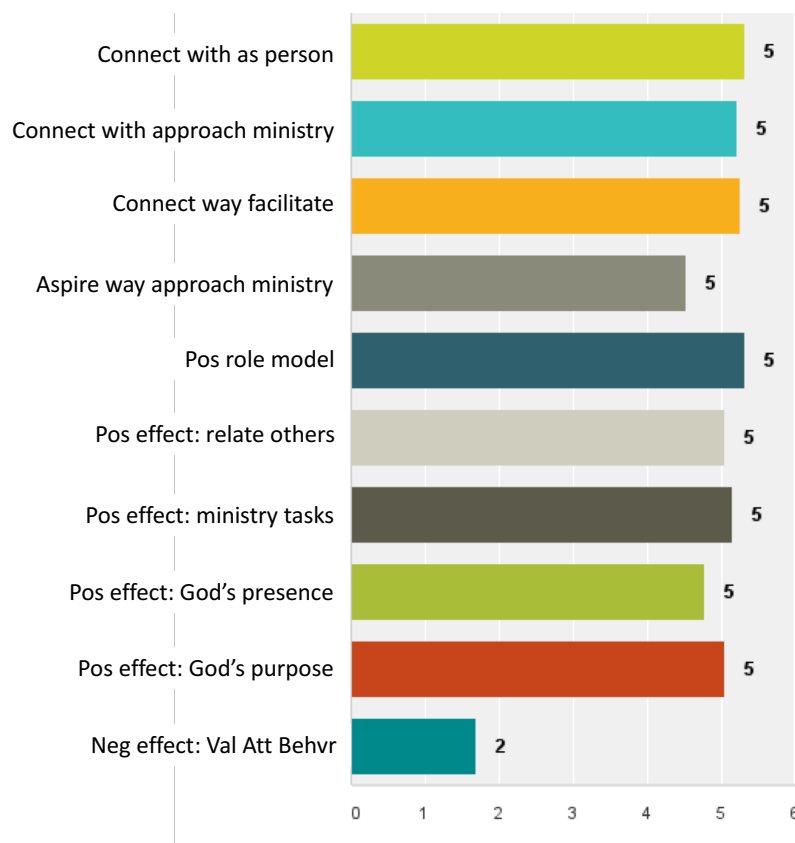


Figure 4.1 Mentee strength of agreement with mimetic variables (BUGB/Association relationship started < 5 years ago)

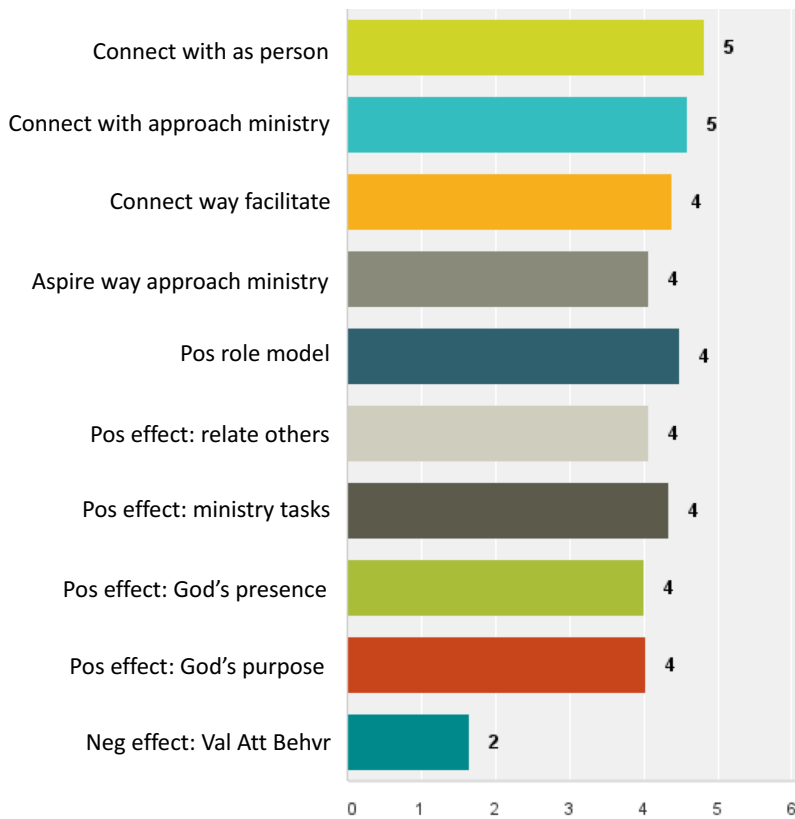


Figure 4.2 Mentee strength of agreement with mimetic variables (BUGB/Association relationship started > 5 years ago)

These results indicate a high average level of agreement concerning three key areas of mentoring experience (quality of connection, sense of modelling and a positive impact on attitudes and behaviour) among Baptist minister-mentees who responded. Such outcomes suggest high quality relating, practically effective development through mentoring in important ministry areas and the presence of modelling effect. Each of these is theoretically associated with mimetic effect. Encouragement is also found here for the overall quality of and impact of the mentoring taking place across these two Associations.

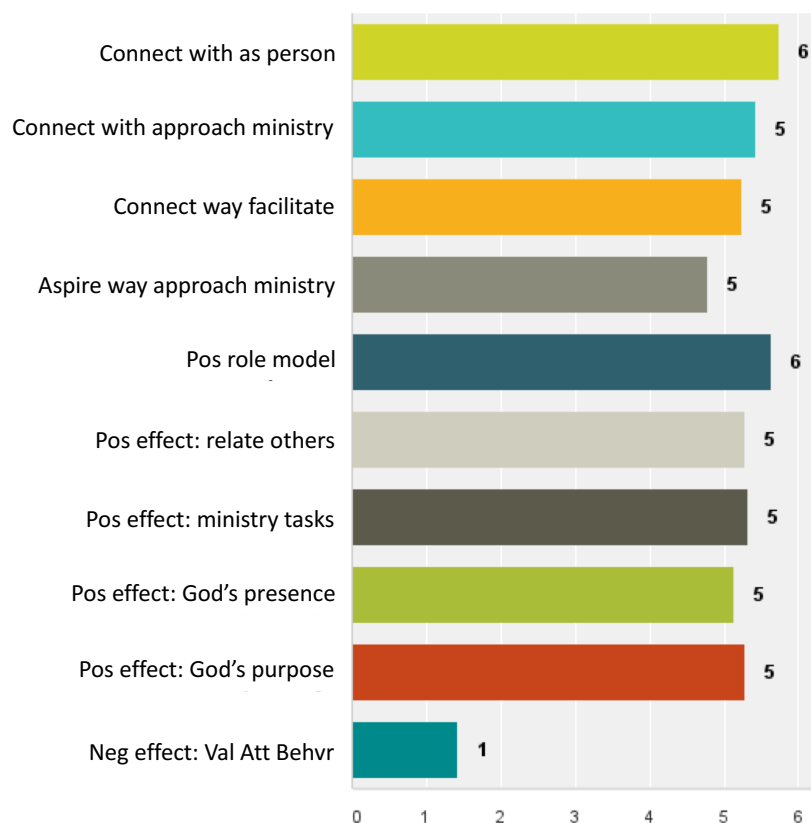


Figure 4.3 Mentee strength of agreement with mimetic variables  
(Voluntarily arranged mentoring since fully accredited)

Two further items of relevance to this study can be seen by further comparing the relative reported experiences of participants regarding these sets of mimetic variables. These are the methodological desirability of preventing recall bias and distortion when conducting interviews about historic experiences and the significance of the process of selecting a mentor. Table 4.1 shows the percentage figures for each statement and Likert response regarding each of the three mentoring arrangements. Mentee agreement or disagreement with variables enables further comparison of the perceived experience by participants of a voluntarily selected mentor with one who was allocated by the Baptist Union of Great Britain and worked with < or > 5 yrs ago.

Variable	Mentoring - BUGB < or > 5 yrs ago or voluntary	Disag strongly	Disag mod	Disag slightly	DISAG TOTAL	Agree slightly	Agree mod	Agree strongly	AGREE TOTAL
Connect with as person	BU Allctd<5 yrs ago	0%	5%	0%	5%	11%	26%	58%	95%
	>5 yrs ago (BU Allctd)	5%	5%	10%	20%	9%	26%	45%	80%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	17%	79%	100%
Connect with approach to ministry	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%	47%	37%	100%
	>5 yrs ago	0%	9%	5%	14%	26%	36%	24%	86%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	50%	46%	100%
Connect with way facilitate	<5 yrs ago	0%	5%	5%	10%	11%	16%	63%	90%
	>5 yrs ago	7%	5%	12%	24%	26%	19%	31%	86%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	8%	8%	4%	42%	46%	92%
Aspire way approach ministry	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	16%	16%	37%	26%	21%	84%
	>5 yrs ago	7%	10%	10%	27%	29%	29%	15%	73%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	4%	4%	33%	42%	21%	96%
Positive role model	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	47%	42%	100%
	>5 yrs ago	7%	3%	5%	15%	29%	32%	24%	85%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	21%	71%	100%
Positive effect relate to others	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	6%	6%	17%	44%	33%	94%
	>5 yrs ago	7%	12%	7%	26%	33%	22%	19%	74%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%	46%	42%	100%
Positive effect ministry tasks	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	11%	11%	5%	42%	42%	89%
	>5 yrs ago	5%	5%	7%	17%	32%	36%	15%	83%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	0%	0%	21%	25%	54%	100%
Positive effect God's presence	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	11%	11%	26%	37%	26%	89%
	>5 yrs ago	7%	10%	7%	24%	40%	24%	12%	76%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	8%	8%	17%	29%	46%	92%
Positive effect God's purpose	<5 yrs ago	0%	0%	5%	5%	26%	26%	43%	95%
	>5 yrs ago	4%	10%	10%	24%	38%	31%	7%	76%
	Voluntary	0%	0%	4%	4%	17%	25%	54%	96%
Neg eff val/ att bhviour	<5 yrs ago	75%	5%	10%	90%	0%	5%	5%	10%
	>5 yrs ago	67%	12%	14%	93%	5%	2%	0%	7%
	Voluntary	79%	13%	4%	96%	0%	0%	4%	4%

Table 4.1 Comparison of mentee scores for mimetic variables  
(BUGB mentor < or > 5 yrs ago or voluntary)

Mentees who had voluntarily chosen their mentor showed greater percentages and stronger levels of agreement with each statement than respondents reporting on their experience of allocated mentors, whether more than or less than 5 years ago. This suggests that freedom to choose a mentor includes a range of factors which affect the outcome of the sense of connection, aspiration to be like them, seeing them as a model, and for there to be a perception that they have a positive impact on values, attitudes and behaviour. The process of selection and matching have been shown to affect the perceived quality of mentoring relationship and the developmental effectiveness of mentoring. Protégé input into the matching and mentoring process has also been shown to increase the impact on positive mentoring outcomes for the mentee (Allen, Eby and Lentz, 2006; Illies et al, 2018). Role modelling effect is more likely where there is perceived similarity, trust (a relationship quality likely to be important when a mentee voluntarily takes the initiative in selecting a mentor), and when mentoring is informal (Ghosh, 2014). A youth, academic and workplace interdisciplinary study of potential antecedents, correlates and consequences found that positive protégé perceptions of instrumental support, psychosocial support, and relationship quality were most strongly associated with greater similarity in attitudes, values, beliefs, and personality with their mentors (Eby et al, 2013).

The number of respondents in the category of voluntarily arranged mentoring is higher (42) than those reporting on allocated mentors whether < or > 5 years ago (20 and 24 respectively). This 'voluntarily arranged mentor' larger population may have resulted in a more statistically representative spread of responses (Bryman and Bell, 2007) and a genuine indication of a less positive experience of their NAM mentor. It could also suggest recall bias. The passage of time since working with an allocated mentor and the effect of growth in experience, understanding and technical ability may have affected interpretations of the impact of the mentoring relationship (Bradburn et al, 1987). Ministers reflecting on a mentoring relationship that is less than 5 years ago will still be relatively new to ministry – usually often in their first pastorate - and perhaps likely to recall the psychosocial support as well as professional learning gained in working with their mentor as an accessible model of being a minister. At this time a new minister is often still finding his/her individual shape and pattern for ministry. A more experienced minister is in a position to distinguish more clearly between themselves and their historic mentor. The possible negative time-lapse effect on perceptions of the connections with and positive benefits from a mentor including any modelling effect supports the decision in this study to select mentees for interview whose experience of their mentor is current or very recent as an important means of gaining accurate recall and data.

The relative strength of agreement by survey respondents that a benefit of mentoring has been in providing a model of how to be a minister can be seen in Figure 4.4. Strongest average levels of agreement are for the psychosocial function of *providing a safe place to reflect on experiences of ministry* and *encouragement and support to sustain role when things are tough-going*. There is, however, a higher average strength of agreement regarding the benefit of *a model of how to be a minister* - the modelling function identified by Kram (1988) - than for the career function of *opportunity to decide about personal development goals* and *professional, technical information and advice about particular aspects of ministry*.

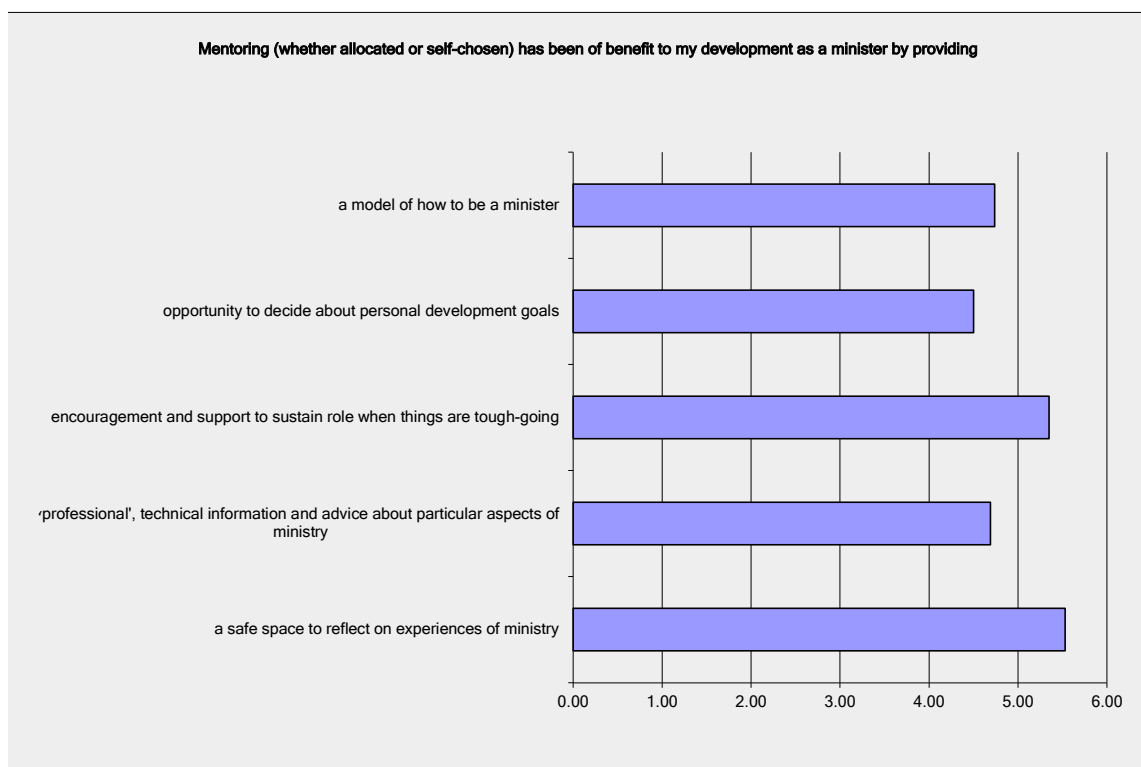


Figure 4.4 Benefits of mentoring

The importance of a modelling effect in the mentoring experienced by respondents has been observed in survey responses to questions about *aspiring to be like their mentor* or *seeing them as a role model* (Figures 4.1-4.3 and Table 4.1) Here is additional data supporting the presence and importance of a modelling dynamic associated with mimetic effect.

Identification with, being attracted to, and admiring an exemplar, cannot be said from this data to automatically lead to a person aspiring to be like that other person or to see them



as a role model, still less to actually reproduce their attitudes, values or behaviour. Here, however, is a further indication of mentees seeing their mentor as a model.

The conditions underlying a mentee aspiring to be like or seeing their mentor as a role model are further discussed in the next two chapters. Here we note that attractive qualities leading to admiration and a sense of moral elevation have been found to be a vital condition in exemplar modelling (Croce and Vaccarezza, 2017; Zagzebski, 2013). Also, a sense of connection-identification between a person and an exemplar model in terms of perceived similarity, relevance, and attainability have been found to make emulation more likely (Han et al, 2017). The dynamic involved in choosing and building a relationship with a mentor, with prior similarity (Eby et al, 2013) and exemplar attractiveness (Zagzebski, 2013) as two factors, is important in making findings about antecedents and factors that explain mimetic effect and will be further discussed in chapters five and six.

The presence of a positive impact from a mentor on their mentee attitudes, values and behaviour is indicated in the survey results. Table 4.1 shows that most respondents in each of the three categories (whether regarding a voluntarily arranged mentor or a BUGB allocated one of less than or of greater than 5 years) showed clear levels of agreement that their mentor had a positive effect on aspects of their attitudes, values and behaviour. Respondents expressed overall agreement that their mentor had a positive effect on: the way they related to others (overall agreement of 74-100%); their approach to ministry tasks (83-100%), their sense of God's presence (76-92%), and their sense of participating in God's purposes (76-96%). The highest percentages of respondents and strongest levels of agreement was from those reporting on experience of a voluntarily arranged mentor. This high proportion of respondent agreement, and strength of agreement, is matched by a very strong level of disagreement by respondents in each category with the statement 'My mentor has had a negative effect on my values, attitudes and behaviour.' 90-96% disagreed that there has been a negative effect (see Table 4.1).

The aim is to find explanations of mimetic effect and these must be ones that are most consistent with the data. It has been established that there are high percentages of agreement that a mentor has had a positive impact on the attitudes, values and behaviour of his/her mentee. This does not demonstrate that there are causal or other associations between the three sets of variables of connection, aspiration/modelling, and positive impact because a separate unidentified independent variable could produce this outcome (Field,

2009). In the next section statistical analysis is used to explore whether there are relationships between a positive impact on the mentee's attitudes, values and behaviour, and a sense of connection with a mentor, and aspiring to be like a mentor/seeing him or her as model. Relationships between these variables will be further analysed in chapters five and six.

#### 4.2 Indications of a relationship between three mimetic variables

The survey was designed to identify the presence of variables theoretically expected to be related to mimetic effect. Closely connected variables were combined to produce three new ones of: a sense of connection with a mentor; aspiration/modelling; and a positive impact on mentee approaches to ministry and God. These three *combined* categorical variables were produced by calculating the mean of the Likert scores for each variable and using the Transform>Compute a new target variable function on SPSS. Three new variables were created: *connection*, *aspirational/model* and *positive impact* (on attitudes, behaviour and feelings). The new independent/predictor *connection* variable comprises: the degree of experienced connection with the mentor as a person, with his/her approach to ministry, and with how he or she facilitated mentoring meetings. The new dependent/outcome *aspirational/model* variable comprises: aspiring to be like them in how they approach ministry combined with seeing the mentor as a positive role model. The new dependent/outcome *positive impact* variable comprises: describing the model as having a positive effect on behaviour values, attitudes or behaviour (in regard to relating to other people, engaging in ministry tasks, sensing God's presence, and participating in God's purposes). Responses to a reverse-scored check question concerning *negative* affect on values, attitudes or behaviour was included in the positive impact variable.

53 respondents had independently answered once about each variable for BUGB allocated mentoring after excluding for missing data. Of these

- 47 agreed that they experienced a connection (6 disagreed).
- 46 agreed that they aspired to be like or saw their mentor as a role model (7 disagreed)
- 40 agreed that their mentor had had a positive impact on their values, attitudes and behaviour (13 disagreed)

The mean for each set of these three new variables was sorted manually into binary 'agree' or 'disagree' codes in readiness for frequency count comparisons using the crosstab function in SPSS. A non-parametric technique comparing the frequencies

observed in these categories with what might be expected by chance was used to determine whether there is a relationship between each pair of variables: *connection* and *aspiration/modelling*; *connection* and *positive impact*. The small sample with expected frequencies in each cell being low (not reaching more than 5) meant Pearson's chi square test could not be used. Instead a chi-square (Fisher's exact) test was used to compute the exact probability of the chi square statistic. Non-parametric independent group analyses (two-sided Fisher's exact test on a 2x2 contingency table) using cross tabulation in SPSS produced the following outcomes:

*Connection and aspiration to be like/see as a model*

There is a significant relationship between mentees' sense of connection with their mentors and aspiration to be like/see their mentor as a model. For people who say they agree that they connect with their mentor and also agree that they aspire to be like them, a significant relationship has been demonstrated through Fisher's exact Test (equivalent of Chi Square). Statistical analysis using a two-sided Fisher's exact test (see Table 4.2, below) showed a much higher frequency of association between the independent variable, connection with a mentor, and the dependent variable, aspiring to be like/see them as a model, than expected by chance ( $P < 0.001$ , Fisher's exact test).

<b>Connection * Aspire Crosstabulation</b>				
Count				
		Aspire		Total
		.00	1.00	
Connection	.00	5	1	6
	1.00	2	45	47
Total		7	46	53

Table 4.2 Connection and aspire crosstabulation

*Connection and positive impact*

There is a significant relationship between mentees' sense of connection with their mentors and reported positive impact by mentors on mentees' attitudes and behaviour. For people who say they agree that they connect with their mentor and agree that there is also positive effect on their relational experience and behaviour, a significant relationship has been demonstrated through Fisher's exact Test (equivalent of chi square) than would otherwise be expected. Statistical analysis using a two-sided Fisher's exact test (see Table 4.3, below) showed a much higher frequency of association between the independent variable, connection with a mentor, and the dependent

variable, positive impact on their relational experience and behaviour, than expected by chance ( $P < 0.001$ , Fisher's exact test)

### Connection \* PosImpact Crosstabulation

Count		PosImpact		Total
		.00	1.00	
Connection	.00	6	0	6
	1.00	7	40	47
Total		13	40	53

Table 4.3 Connection and positive impact crosstabulation

Additional findings emerge from the agreement scores comparison shown below. In the connection and positive impact cross tabulation (Table 4.4, below), seven agreed that there was a connection but disagreed that there was a positive impact. None of the respondents who disagreed that there had been a connection with their mentor thought that there had been a positive impact. This indicates that there needs to be a connection for there to be a positive impact but having a connection doesn't always have a positive impact. A sense of connection may be a condition for positive impact but does not guarantee it.

### Connection & positive impact: agreement scores comparison

Agree both	40
Agree connection, disagree positive impact	7
Disagree connection, agree positive impact	0
Disagree both	6

Table 4.4 Connection and positive impact: agreement scores comparison

#### *Aspiration to be like/see as a model and positive impact*

For people who say they agree that they aspire to be like their mentor and agree that there is also a positive effect on their relational experience and behaviour, a significant relationship has been demonstrated through Fisher's exact Test (equivalent of Chi Square) than would otherwise be expected. Statistical analysis using a two-sided Fisher's exact test (see Table 4.5, below) showed a much higher frequency of association between the dependent variable, aspiring to be like/see their mentor as a model, and the dependent variable, positive effect on their relational experience and behaviour, than expected by chance ( $P < 0.001$ , Fisher's exact test).

### Aspire \* PosImpact Crosstabulation

Count

		PosImpact		
		.00	1.00	Total
Aspire	.00	7	0	7
	1.00	6	40	46
Total		13	40	53

Table 4.5 Aspire and positive crosstabulation

Additional findings emerge from the agreement scores comparison shown below. In the following aspire and positive impact cross tabulation (Table 4.6), six agreed that they aspired to be like their mentor or saw them as a model but did not feel they had a positive impact. Aspiration to be like/see as a model does not guarantee positive impact. It is also suggested, however, that there is not a positive impact if there is no aspiration to be like a mentor or to see them as a model.

### Aspire and positive impact: agreement scores comparison

Agree both	40
Agree aspire, disagree positive impact	6
Disagree aspire, agree positive impact	0
Disagree both	7

Table 4.6 Aspire and positive impact: agreement scores comparison

As an independent variable, *connection* (with the mentor as a person, in the way he/she approaches ministry, and with the way he/she facilitates the mentoring process) is a factor associated with mimetic effect in mentoring. A strong sense of connection, however, cannot in itself be said to account for mimetic effect. In this chapter it is acknowledged that the first two of these *connection* categories may include the concept of identification which encompasses similarities in a range of areas like ethnicity, gender, education, culture, religious and spiritual affiliations, and socioeconomic position and also the concept of perceived attractiveness (Allen et al, 2006). There is growing interest in accounts of the interdisciplinary concept of mimesis with the actual process of mimetic formation, for example the attractiveness and identification with a model exemplar and their goals and attitudes (Vianello et al, 2010; Zagzebski, 2013). There is further discussion of the contribution of depth of connection to mimetic effect in chapters five to seven.

#### 4.3 Respondents selected for interview

Analysis of these three sets of variables shows an association that would not be expected randomly. This supports the survey design based on theoretical expectations of variables in mimetic effect. It does not demonstrate causal relationships. Though a sense of connection may be a condition for a positive impact, a positive impact is not likely if there is no aspiration to be like a mentor or see them as a role model.

<b>Survey responses regarding mimetic effect indicators for five mentees selected for interview (by pseudonym)</b>						
<i>Statements evaluating experience of mentor</i>	Disagree strongly	Disagree modtly	Disagr slightly	Agree slightly	Agree Moderately	Agree strongly
I connect with him/her as a person						Carl Brian Wanda Larry Kevin
I connect with his/her approach to ministry					Wanda	Carl Brian Larry Kevin
I connect with the way that (s)he facilitates our mentoring meetings					Kevin	Carl Brian Wanda Larry
I aspire to be like him/her in the way that they approach ministry					Kevin	Carl Brian Wanda Larry
I see him/her as a positive role model						Carl Brian Wanda Larry Kevin
(S)he has positively affected the way I relate to other people					Kevin	Carl Brian Wanda Larry
(S)he has positively affected the way I engage in ministry tasks					Kevin	Carl Brian Wanda Larry
(S)he has positively affected my sense of God's presence					Larry Kevin	Carl Brian Wanda
(S)he has positively affected my sense of participating in God's purposes					Larry Kevin	Carl Brian Wanda
(S)he has negatively affected my values, attitudes or behaviour	Carl Brian Wanda Larry Kevin					
Mentee helped in development as minister by mentor as role model					Larry	Carl Brian Wanda Kevin

Table 4.7 Survey responses regarding mimetic effect indicators for mentees selected for interview

As well as being one source in building contextual background for explanation of mimetic effect, one planned outcome of the survey was to enable selection of current or recent (<two years) mentoring dyads for semi-structured interviews seeking to further identify and understand the dynamics of mimetic effect. This was by seeking to identify indications of mentor-to-mentee modelling and influence in the experience of mentees who responded to the survey and who expressed willingness to engage in further research. Theoretical selection rather than random or stratified sampling was appropriate because the study-aim was to develop explanation rather than testing it (Eisenhardt, 2007, p.27).

Following the survey, initial analysis was undertaken to enable purposive selection of candidates for interview from those who indicated high levels of agreement in the three sets of variables comprising connection, aspiration/modelling and positive impact. For respondents who indicated a willingness to participate in further research, manual analysis was used to rank Likert *strength of agreement* scores for survey answers relating to theoretically relevant indications of mimetic effect. This was in order to purposively identify promising candidates for in-depth interview from mentees who overall indicated highest strength of agreement with the following three sets of variables theoretically expected to be associated with mimetic effect in mentoring. The first of these aspects asked about their sense of *connection* - with the mentor as a person, with their facilitation of the mentoring meeting, and with their approach to ministry. The second aspect focused on *role-model effect* – how strongly they agreed that they aspired to be like their mentor in the way that they approached ministry and saw their mentor at that time as a positive role model. The third aspect built on this area with four statements about *positive mentor-to-mentee effect* on relating to other people, engaging in ministry tasks, sensing God's presence and participating in God's purposes. A further reverse-worded statement was used in this section enabling participants to indicate strength of agreement or disagreement that their mentor had *negatively* affected their own values, attitudes or behaviour. The scores of the five selected candidates who fulfilled the criteria for interview regarding their experience of a current or very recent mentor and their reported view on the benefit of mentoring to their development can be seen in Table 4.7. A tie between scores for these three sets of variables was settled by choosing a respondent who had the highest strength of agreement for role modelling as a benefit of mentoring.

#### 4.4 Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings of the quantitative survey considered to be directly relevant to this study into mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. The perception of survey respondents is agreement that there has been a positive impact by their mentor on their own attitudes, values and behaviour. There is also a clear perception of agreeing with a sense of connection with their mentor and that there is an aspiration to be like or see him/her or as a model. This supports the survey design which was to discover the presence of variables theoretically expected to be associated with mimetic effect.

Statistical analysis using a non-parametric independent group analysis (two-sided Fisher's exact test on a 2x2 contingency table) showed that there is an association between these sets of variables of *connection* and *aspiration and modelling*; and *connection* and a *positive impact on attitudes, values and behaviour*. This also supports the survey design which was to discover the presence of variables theoretically expected to be associated with mimetic effect. It is also important for two further reasons in supporting the process of selection for and the focus of the qualitative phase of the study. First, participants for interview were selected by ranking respondents' strength of agreement with survey statements designed to indicate the presence of the variables based on theoretical expectations regarding mimetic effect (Table 4.7). Second, subsequent interviews were also conducted on this basis and focused on exploring these variables in greater depth.

Fisher's exact test has demonstrated that a significant association (greater than might be expected by chance) has been found between the independent variable *connection* and each of two dependent 'outcome' variables: *aspire to be like/modelling* and *positive impact* on behaviour, attitudes and values. There is also an association between the two dependent variables of *aspire to be like/modelling* and *positive impact*.

A cross tabulation comparison of *connection* and *positive impact* suggested that there needs to be a connection for there to be a positive impact but having a connection doesn't always have a positive impact. A sense of connection may be a condition for positive impact but does not guarantee it. A cross tabulation comparison of *aspire to be like/model* and *positive impact* suggested that aspiration to be like/see as a model does not guarantee positive impact but also that there is not a positive impact if there is no aspiration to be like a mentor or to see them as a model.



Finding evidence for these three sets of variables (connection, aspire to be like/modelling, positive impact on attitudes, values and behaviour) has not demonstrated causal relationships, though the data has suggested that a sense of connection may be a condition for a positive impact. Also, that a positive impact is not likely if there is no aspiration to be like a mentor or seeing them as a role model. Analysis of the survey data suggests that a sense of connection and aspiring to be like/see a mentor as a model are necessary conditions for though not guarantees of a positive impact on mentees which could include mimetic effect.

In this chapter, the first part of mixed data analysis (Teddlie, 2009, p. 269) has been conducted using descriptive statistics and one statistical test for the appropriate variables. Statistical analysis of the data has been focused on establishing the presence of a significant relationship between the variables that have been chosen and to purposively select participants for exploring mimetic effect in qualitative interviews. It would be useful to test any conceptual and explanatory mechanisms via a further quantitative study and statistical analysis. Qualitative thematic analysis related to the interview data follows in the next chapters. The complete set of survey responses and those of mentees selected for interview informed their individual interviews. The quantitative and qualitative sets of data have been analysed independently, each able to contribute to understanding mimetic effect (Teddlie, 2009).

## Chapter Five: Mimetic effect and amenability in the mentee

This is the first of two chapters presenting findings of three overarching themes and their sub-themes regarding mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. Thematic analysis has been used to identify these themes and sub-themes. Insights from separate field practitioner interviews have been included in the discussion where relevant. The research aim is to identify and understand mimetic effect and its dynamics. This chapter focuses on the themes of reported mimetic effect and modelling in the dyad and on the theme of mentee amenability to mimetic desire. These themes are found in the data from the qualitative interviews of mentees and their mentors in five Baptist minister mentoring dyads. Table 5.1, below, shows the themes that are analysed in this chapter and the next.

THEME ONE <b>Mimetic effect In the mentee</b>	THEME TWO <b>Mentee amenability to mimetic desire</b>	THEME THREE <b>Mentor priorities enhancing mimetic effect</b>
Sub-theme: Reproduced value, attitude or behaviour in mentee	Sub-theme: See the mentor as a model	Sub-theme: Exceeding expected care about and belief in mentee
Sub-theme: Metaphors for change in values, attitude or behaviour	Sub-theme: Admiration of and inspiration by mentor	Sub-theme: Real humanity and disclosure
	Sub-theme: Openness to growth and change	Sub-theme: Prioritising of third person in the room (God and prayer)
	Sub-theme: Creative similarity and difference	

Table 5.1 Mimetic Themes

The analysis approach has been to look for evidence of mimetic effect between mentor and mentee, defined as the reproducing of identifiable attitudes, values and behaviour. The story of each dyad includes evidence of positive mentoring outcomes and developments in virtue, attitudes and skill. A process of mimetic effect accounts for some of this growth. It is reiterated that contributions to mentee growth are expected to also result from other, non-mimetic, aspects of the mentoring process. As in chapter four, it is important to establish and then analyse indications of a mimetic impact on mentees from their mentor. In chapter four the survey data was found to show an association between the sets of variables of connection and aspiration and modelling, and a positive impact

on attitudes, values and behaviour although causal relationships were not demonstrated. Subsequent interviews with dyads have focused on exploring these variables in greater depth. These variables have not determined the themes which have been found in the interview data although inevitably there has been awareness of them throughout the process of thematic analysis.

Indications of mimetic effect drew on reports from the mentee and the mentor in each dyad rather than being directly observed. Mentee-mentor perceptions were compared within each dyad to develop an account of mimetic desire and outcome regarding mentees. A within-dyad comparison of the reported difference found in the mentee across the course of the mentoring relationship has been an important way of identifying potential mimetic impact in the mentee. This 'before and after' theme takes account of the story of change in each mentee: their self-reported perception and that of their mentor. The first two of these sub-themes (see Table 5.1) examines named mimetic outcomes. The second main theme in this chapter is mentee amenability to mimetic desire. The third theme in table 5.1, mentor priorities enhancing mimetic effect, is the focus of the next chapter.

## 5.1 Mimetic effect in the mentees

There were indications of mimetic effect in each dyad. One form of this replication was to reinforce or free up values, attitudes or behaviour already consciously present in a mentee, albeit inhibited or undeveloped. An alternative form of replication could be distinguished where values, attitudes or behaviour hitherto unacknowledged or absent in the experience of the mentee seemed to be triggered or introduced and to subsequently develop.

### 5.1.1 Reproduced value, attitude or behaviour in mentees

In this section, indications from the data of a mentor's value, attitude or behaviour being reproduced in their mentee are summarised. Rick's mentee, Brian has internalised from his mentor more confidence in working out the value of a persevering approach to working with people who seem unresponsive in difficult situations of pastoral care and leadership, as the following quote indicates:

*I think the main one is about the patience and perseverance with people. ...rather than saying, oh well...can I trust them to do it again, cause that time they didn't, couldn't follow it through, actually saying, yep, you must keep on doing that, that's part of that enabling and encouraging the ministry that you've got. (Brian-Mentee)*

Brian regarded compassionate pastoral care and a consensual approach to decision-making as pre-existing abilities, but both areas as ones where he had been finding it difficult to stay with a process rather than give up on an incremental process:

*I think he and I both would work from a more consensual, an enabling basis rather than any form of autocratic model. So, I think he's really just encouraged me into more of those behaviours rather than changed the way that I would do things, to be honest. (Brian-Mentee)*

Perseverance is a value-dimension (Steinbock, 2013) which the mentee speaks with admiration about. The mentor is an exemplar whose example in this particular area attracts the mentee who chooses to translate this value into an attitude which can be applied to both pastoral care and leadership decision-making (Steinbock, 2013). This particular mentor (Rick) acts as an exemplar who models perseverance both in the way in which he work with his mentee and also in his personal life of trust in God in the midst of very difficult health challenges for his wife. Steinbock (2013) describes this as a revelation of a person which fits with their wider shape and personality rather than being an object (value or attitude) displayed by the mentor.

Ed's mentee, Carl, identified the increasing presence in himself of becoming more able to believe in and release the gifts of church members even in the context of otherwise negative feelings about their potential. Carl has internalised and expressed a primary value ('grace') and attitude in his mentor as the following excerpts demonstrate:

*...he would always be wanting to see people come to the fore and develop their gifts. And not be threatened by that. And that's definitely something that I have been trying to do a lot more. (Carl-Mentee)*

*one of the strong motifs I think in terms of my ministry, is grace. You hit the grace pedal. You give people another chance. And I see that in Carl, there's no doubt about it. And so whether or not some of that has caught I don't know...I see that by the bucketful in Carl. And I hope he would see something of it in me. (Ed-Mentor)*

Carl's account also highlighted how his mentor's approach to pacing and careful prioritising regarding God, his wife and family, and leadership had become part of his own approach. He had been enabled to keep fresh and long-term in the same ministry context rather than having to move to a new location and role. As comments from Carl and his mentor Ed put it:

*...you've got to choose the best over the good. And I think from my point of view, I've learnt a lot about that from Ed prioritising, looking after your own personal relationship with God. And your family [...] the analogy I like to use [is]: You're a fresh stream rather than a stagnant pond. (Carl-Mentee)*

*I think that he looks at the way that I put family really centrally, like I do. The way I talk about my wife, the way I talk about, the way I encourage him to invest in his wife. (Ed-Mentor)*

In a different dyad, Harry and his mentee, Kevin, talk about how there has been growth in Kevin's ability to listen and reflect. The following quotes illustrate how this has been modelled and developed:

*I don't know whether it's something I've said: 'Oh I see that in Harry', and therefore I need to be more like that. I don't know, I recognise in my role I need to do, a lot of it involves sitting and listening to people and really listening to what they're saying. And it doesn't come naturally to me. So it's an element I need to work on whereas with some people it's something they just do naturally. (Kevin-Mentee)*

*...he's learning, and sometimes he comes back: 'I should have listened a bit more'. So he's reflecting back that he's starting to do that...he's learning to listen more. (Harry-Mentor)*

In a fourth dyad, Dave's mentee, Larry mentions attitudes regarding work-family balance and also fresh personal confidence to live life in a 'human' way modelled by his mentor in an area about which he has concerns and anxieties.

*... he's quite a relational person, who's managed to combine busy ministry, which I'm sure is full on, much of the time, with sort of family and friends. I think, that's interesting, I wonder what sort of shape that would take...Christian life is the whole [of what makes] me as a human being. (Larry-Mentee).*

His mentor, Dave, refers to Larry being '*more comfortable with himself*', a quality which Larry's mentor is also aware is present in himself seen in his comment '*maybe I project a feeling of being content or comfortable with what I'm doing, or the decisions I'm more confident, or something like that...*'

In a fifth and (the only) all female dyad, Wanda, a new minister, worked with Lynn, a clear-sighted mentor, who is confident about her own strengths and style such as being '*very tenacious and creative*' (Lynn-Mentor). Lynn's mentee, Wanda, shifts to a place of becoming more confident in her calling, leading, preaching and ability to be herself as a female minister in a male-dominated ministerial and church culture. The following quotes illustrate both Wanda's awareness of this development and that of her mentor, Lynn.

*I think it was more about being comfortable with who I am... she helped me to stop WORRYING about other people's judgment, and just to, develop who I was, who - in this role of being a minister - who God has called me to be, and the personality that he has placed within me and to allow that to come through and develop confidence and freedom to push the boundaries but to do it in my own way not quite in the same way as she's done it. (Wanda-Mentee).*

This development in Wanda is observed by her mentor, Lynn:

*So, there's all that sense of anxiety and uncertain, being uncertain about who she was, and uncertain about her role. But that's not the person who has been accredited now. She's comfortable. She's confident. She's still humble and open to learn and able to laugh at some of the things, that previously she'd have taken to heart and that's been great.*

This section has demonstrated the presence of mimetic effect by giving instances of this from the text of interviews with mentees and their respective mentors. A mentee observing and emulating their mentor is an outcome that can be understood according to the three foundational principles of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977). The highest level of observational learning is achieved by first organizing and rehearsing the 'modeled behavior' symbolically and then enacting it overtly (Bandura, 1977, p. 29) making it important for exemplary role models to encourage learners to articulate what they have observed. The second principle is 'individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if it results in outcomes they value' (Bandura, 1977, p. 29). The third principle is that 'individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if the model is similar to the observer and has admired status' (Bandura, 1977, p. 30).

These instances of mimetic effect need to be understood within each mentee's personal story and relational context because this process is not thoughtless, copycat imitation of worthy attitudes, values or behaviour criticised in character-education as mimicking (Kristjánsson, 2007). The process is, rather, of being awakened to aspire to your higher self with its ideals and possibilities (Kristjánsson, 2007). Exemplarist understanding would also emphasise the importance of the person who is exemplar and the process of catching and uniquely expressing something of their inner values and motivations (Steinbock, 2013). These instances of mimetic effect are examples of virtues and virtuous acts in an exemplar-mentor which are seen to be attractive and admirable to the mentee and which have carried 'the impetus to imitate or emulate with it' (Zabzebski, 2017 pp. 20-21). A fuller story of the themes and dynamic of mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers is told by analysing other relevant themes below.

Establishing the presence of mimetic effect in all five dyads prepares the way for looking at other data which indicates that a striking quality in a mentor can be seen as producing a similar value, attitude or behaviour in the mentee. Looking at an account of development in the mentee in relation to values, attitudes and behaviour in the mentor indicates mimetic impact. This becomes clearer under the next sub-theme: Metaphors for change in values, attitudes or behaviour.

### 5.1.2 Metaphors for change in values, attitude or behaviour

In addition to evidence showing a mentee's development of a value, attitude or behaviour in common with their mentor, some mentees used metaphors to indicate mimetic effect. These metaphors include the inner sense or feeling that went with the story of change and progress. In dyad one, Ed, mentor to Carl, expressed how each of them felt after meeting:

*I'm SO aware that I feel more alive, after being with Carl. And one of the things he says to me regularly you know he'll email me after and say, Ed, he'll say, 'my heart is singing.' And I think that if two guys can get together and have that effect on each other, then it's worth continuing.*

The two metaphors of 'feeling more alive' and 'my heart is singing' suggest depth of connection and mutual understanding. They also indicate the strength of mutual reinforcement of commitment to, and vibrancy concerning, the goals that they share regarding family, ministry, and serving God. Such metaphors represent examples of positive emotional response to exemplary excellence in action (Algoe and Haidt, 2009) and a way of developing an understanding of mimetic effect. In their ground-breaking research, Algoe and Haidt (2009) describe the other-praising 'moral emotion' of elevation as the feeling of being uplifted elicited by virtuous acts and accompanied by an inwardly enlarged feeling often accompanied by a warm-chest sensation. Elevation has been found to not simply represent closeness of relationship with another morally excellent person but to also lead to pro-social behaviour and motivation to serve others and emulate the 'virtuous role-model' (Algoe and Haidt, 2009).

In another dyad, three other metaphors were used about the change experienced by Lynn's mentee, Wanda. In progressing towards being more confident about her leadership and ministry Wanda commented about a new freedom she was able to enjoy:

*My mentor encouraged me to think about where and what my style was, to help me to find MY voice, and to be confident in my style and my VOICE, and not to worry so much about what people were saying and criticising. I could more confidently develop my own voice.*

Using a different metaphor of growing wings, Wanda commented about finding herself able to live this out following the departure of some critical members of her church: '*I felt freer to, to be myself and I think that's allowed me to grow some wings.*'

Wanda's mentor, Lynn, also described the growth in Wanda's sense of security and confidence using the water metaphors of submerged, swimming and buoyancy. Lynn

describes Wanda's shift from *'being a little bit submerged sometimes'* to a situation where she is *'swimming along happily at a distance but waving at each other from time to time.'*

As was seen in 5.1.1, Wanda's growth in confidence and security in her function as a minister seems to represent observation of these values, attitudes and behaviour in her mentor and the adopting of these for herself. Wanda's development is an outcome of intentional mentoring which leads to formation for ministry and heightened self-definition (Chiroma and Cloete, 2015). In mentoring, a combination of functions combine to produce outcomes that are desired and valued by a mentee and this includes but is not limited to modelling by the mentor (Murphy and Kram, 2010). Although Wanda's transition may look in part like the outcome of talk therapy, mentoring may involve a combination and integration of the several relational developmental processes of coaching, counselling, advising and teaching (Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002). The mimetic effect in this case enhances Wanda's ability to develop and be effective in her career ('calling') outcome through role-modelling (Kram, 1985; Allen et al, 2004).

In summary, the presence of mimetic effect has been indicated in each of the dyads. It has been identified explicitly in descriptions of actual values, attitudes and behaviour which have been reproduced with further implicit evidence found in metaphors for change used by participants.

## 5.2 Mentees' amenability to mimetic desire

The theme of mentee amenability to desire represents observations in the data naming aspiration and modelling effect. It is also an interpretation of indications in the mentoring relationship of a mentee's felt need for change and growth.

### 5.2.1 Seeing mentor as a model

In this section we analyse indications that mentors are viewed as modelling a value, attitude or behaviour whether or not an overt aspiration or desire is named. Modelling is theoretically understood to be one of the components and indicators of the dynamic that leads to mimetic effect. In some instances a mentee actually aspires to or desires a quality in their mentor. This may include perceiving their mentor as admirable or inspirational. In other instances admiration or inspiration are identifiable but without any reference to aspiration. It is noted that the presence of mimetic effect has already been found in each dyad (see 5.1 above).



Reflecting back on what he was looking for in a mentor, Larry specifies inspiration and aspiration regarding the sort of real and human model and role-modelling mentor he was seeking, an ethical leader with weaknesses as well as strengths (Weaver et al 2005):

*I think I didn't express it at the time I guess, I was kind of looking for without realising it, was actually another person who would be REAL. And would help me walk the journey that God's set out for us. I didn't really know what a mentor was, but I was looking for someone who would model things. (Larry-Mentee)*

The relationship between Brian, Kevin and their respective mentors includes the aspiration and desire for qualities perceived to be in their mentor. Brian explicitly names patterns of relating to God - spiritual practice – especially prayer and reflecting on the Bible that have been modelled by his mentor with a significant impact on his desiring to do the same in his own life and ministry:

*My mentor's got some really good and helpful behaviours that he models in terms of his personal spirituality which has been helpful to me in giving me some guidance on the kind of things I can build into my pattern of life working life if you like. (Brian-Mentee)*

To this Brian adds his sense of how his mentor applies and lives out his faith including how the illness of his wife has deepened his faith bringing him

*closer to God not pushed him away...just such an example really... he's a role model in terms of his spiritual life, his biblical knowledge and application and his nature really. [And] the fruit of the Spirit really in terms of his kindness and his gentleness, and his self-control. You know, all of those things, you see in him. (Brian-Mentee)*

Kevin also describes aspiring to be able to offer to others the thoughtful care, mentoring accompaniment and relating to people which he has experienced from the modelling of his mentor who 'he looks up to' (Weaver et al, 2005):

*I would love to be able to do what Harry has done for me, for somebody else. I see Harry in other contexts. And there are elements in the way he deals with people that I observe and think; 'I want to learn that.' (Kevin-Mentee)*

Kevin is explicit in his aspiration in these places but he also acknowledges that some of what goes on is an unconscious process: *'I don't know whether it's something I've said: 'Oh I see that in Harry', and therefore I need to be more like that. I don't know...'*

Wanda is one of the mentees who are careful in their responses to the concept of aspiring to be like their mentor *'recognising that actually we were different but that's good to be different and I don't necessarily want to be exactly the same as her. It's more about growing what was there within me.'* Wanda's mentor, Lynn, makes clear similar misgivings about the presence of aspiration: *'Aspired to be like me - I don't think I'd even think of it in those terms really! I hope not anyway! I don't want her to be like me, I want her to be like her!'* These sentiments were also found in other mentors who either

resisted the idea of modelling and aspiration or, like Rick in the following quote, wanted to qualify them, *'a role model - NO!', and Harry, 'I don't think there is an aspiration to be me at all'*. As a mentor, Dave is also uncomfortable with the idea of aspiring to be like and links any modelling effect with talking about things or reflecting on things. These participants were keen to distinguish between the problematic phrase 'aspiring to be like' and seemingly more acceptable term 'modelling' as a preferred way of understanding mimetic process (Kristjansson 2006, cf Moberg, 2000). The value of being yourself and empowering others to do the same is not easy to hold alongside the possibility that modelling and emulation are standard behaviour towards someone who is admired and part of how people develop rather than automatically signs of a toxic relationship or insecurity (Croce et al, 2017).

There are undoubtedly dangers of coercion and toxicity in mentoring relationships where potential inequalities in power and a lack of awareness could combine in a way that damages the freedom and choices of the mentee (Washington, 2012). Sam, a field practitioner is very aware of dangers regarding the very real influence of a mentor:

*when a mentor and a mentoree [sic] are in close relationships, like the mentor moves into the soul space of the mentoree. And the warning is, be very careful who you allow into your soul space. Cause there will be an effect...the person of the mentor - who the mentor is will - have some kind of impact on who the mentoree is. (Sam, field practitioner)*

Sam recommends great care in choosing the mentor as one way of protecting against baleful influence:

*make sure that they have spiritual vitality, emotional maturity, intellectual perception and then there's this kind of 'X' factor. Jesus, just before he chooses his disciples - goes away and prays for a night, and then he calls them. I really think that prayer has to be deliberately an essential part of any kind of entering into a mentoring partnership. (Sam, field practitioner)*

The negative aspects of a modelling dynamic in mentoring is also highlighted but put into perspective by Tina, another of the field practitioners:

*I say I don't want them to be clones of me...but if it starts to go that way I don't think we should be scared if it. Cause I think it's a natural thing that will happen. But I think if the mentor sees it happening then I think they should be asking questions, to help the mentee to think for themselves. I think that sometimes you have to go through a bit of them seeing you and wanting to copy you, I think you have to go through a bit of that so that you build the trust and then you can challenge it. (Tina, Field practitioner)*

This discomfort by participants in owning up to and expressing clarity about what modelling is for and how it works illustrates the relevance of understanding the power and dynamic of mimetic effect in mentoring. For example, the character-education movement emphasises the value of role-models in encouraging moral virtue but can be

unclear about what is needed and why, and particularly about how students are inspired to emulate (Kristjánsson, 2007). Some participants have their own clear perception regarding the mimetic dynamic, with Carl's mentor, Ed being comfortable with modelling as long as a person was being authentic which for him included genuine passion, vulnerability and transparency:

*any kind of modelling has to stem from reality. It's about being who you are not what you want to project. And so I think any modelling worth its salt has got to come from a place of vulnerability. It's got to come from a place of transparency. Passion is caught...if you're clearly affected by what you're talking about, it's going to have an impact on the person you're talking to, and vice-versa! (Ed-Mentor)*

Harry also qualified modelling as something which had contributed to his own growth and identity, and was to be expected but which needed to be authentic and to reflect Christian values:

*As a Christian minister I think it's exactly the same modelling as Jesus did with his disciples... modelling is an interesting description of it. Rather than dictating, or teaching I think it's something that they grasp. I look back on my own journey and I see people who've modelled for me different aspects of christian life. What I mean by that is actually, [...] just by being with them I learnt. I gained not because I thought I'm going to be like him, but I saw the strength of that, and I think that has become a part of who I am. (Harry-Mentor)*

Much human behaviour is learned observationally through modelling, however, merely exposing an observer to a modelled behaviour will not ensure that this is adopted and integrated because learning from a role model is much more than mere imitation (Bandura, 1977). Role-modelling assumes learning from observing someone else but does not describe the process which according to Moberg (2000) requires three conditions to occur: relevant desire and motivation to adopt or reproduce the model's attitudes, values or behaviour; focused attention on the model; an ability to actually reproduce the modelled attitude or behaviour. As was observed in analysis of the survey data (see 4.2), seeing a mentor as a model or aspiring to be like him or her in the way they approach ministry or faith are necessary conditions for, though not guarantees of, a positive impact on mentees which could include mimetic effect. It is possible for a mentee to see his or her mentor as a model and not reproduce any of their qualities.

In this section aspiration to be like and modelling have been shown to need distinguishing. My interview question about aspiring to be like a mentor (rather than aspiring to or desiring qualities in the mentor) was confusing and misleading to some participants, though it did elicit clarifying comments about aspiration and modelling.

Uneasiness about the concepts of aspiration and modelling may be to do with lack of reflection on the process of mentoring. It also seems to reflect reluctance to accept the implied degree of influence by a mentor with its possibility of abuse of power and toxicity (Washington, 2012).

#### 5.2.2 Admiration of and inspiration by mentor

In interviewing each mentee, it was found that admiration is part of but not identical to inspiration by mentors. It is present in words and also in the tone and way in which mentors are mentioned. Carl speaks of Ed as having '*magnetic personality in the sense that people seem drawn to him...the word character keeps bouncing back, his demeanour which I quite like.*' Admiration with inspiration are also present in Carl's direct statements:

*he won't shy away from things. Even if that means it's going to be uncomfortable...that's something that I've admired in him, definitely. I'm not identical to Ed, but I would like to think I identify with him and some of his character traits. So, he has been an inspiration in terms of how I might have wanted to do ministry and lead life.*

It is also present in the way Wanda and Larry speak of their mentors' ability to enter and manage demanding or complicated family situations, or regarding the way in which they lead their lives or churches, or in the appreciation for beyond the call of duty care and availability to them as mentees, a theme explored in the next chapter.

Mentee admiration for and inspiration by mentors as models seems to be an emotional feeling applied generally to a mentor as well as about specific mentor qualities. The result is heightened motivation towards practical emulation. Admiration can be understood as an emotion elicited by individuals of competence which exceeds common standards (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). This 'other-praising' concept of admiration facilitates learning with participants consistently wanting to emulate the admirable person and improve themselves. (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). Social learning theories conceptualise vicarious learning and emulation as more likely to be prompted by models that are admired (Bandura 1977). This assertion has begun to be empirically tested with Immordino-Yang and Sylvan conducting a neuroscientific study of admiration for virtue (2010). They found that admiration for another person's virtue was an important contributor in positively motivating desire for moral improvement and has non-conscious physical/gut-neural aspects as well as conscious cognitive ones (Immordino-Yang and Sylvan, 2010). Sarapin et al (2015) have developed and begun to test a 14-item Multidimensional Admiration Scale to facilitate research on social learning theories concerning admiration with the resulting scores validated across two small studies.

In an interesting unpublished thesis, Morgenroth (2015), describes her development of a new motivational theory of role modelling framework in which role models are understood to influence goals and motivation in three distinct ways: by acting as behavioural models, by representing the possible, and by being inspirational. Role models must be perceived to exhibit goal embodiment, attainability, and desirability (which includes but is greater than admiration) in order to motivate role aspirants to strive towards their own pre-existing goals or to embrace new goals (Morgenroth, 2015). A conceptual model of admiration developed by Onu et al (2016) highlights how admiration has a social learning function in the signposting and emulating of a skill or talent in successful models. As has been found in this study, mentee 'admiration for' or 'inspiration by' does not necessarily lead to emulation because factors like motivation (for example, a fit with personal goals) and the situation (for example, feasibility with circumstances) will determine whether the act of imitation does occur (Onu et al, 2016).

Schindler et al's study (2013) is of particular note because it distinguishes the different ways that admiration and their concept of adoration combine in motivating the formation of personal and communal ideals, values and identities. They find that admiration motivates the internalisation and emulation of ideals in an outstanding role model and promotes the individual learning and change - mimetic effect - in view in this study (Schindler et al, 2013). In understanding the shared reference point of the mentees and mentors, expressed in but not limited to talk of God and to God, the emotion of adoration (reverence, worship and veneration) motivates individual and mutual commitment to the teachings and expectations of a superhuman or sacred meaning maker or benefactor (Schindler et al, 2013). This binding people together in shared adoration as part of a community sharing the same vision and ideals (Schindler et al, 2015) is relevant to discussion below on the themes of connection and a third person in the room.

In this section feelings of admiration and inspiration have been considered together and can be understood as related motivational states with emotional content (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). Inspiration comprises transcendence (better and higher possibilities); evocation (spontaneous feelings of energy and pleasure) and motivation (to act out the higher possibility that has been newly glimpsed) a three stranded concept (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). There is inspiration *by* an illuminating trigger object like a role model and inspiration *to* a higher goal for self (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). Among many sources of inspiration one common source is the standout achievements or abilities of others (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). Admirable and inspirational embodiment of an attainable

quality by a mentor-model contributes to an increase in a mentee's amenability to mimetic desire.

A further aspect of this theme of amenability to mimetic desire relates to the level of a mentee's openness to growth and change.

### 5.2.3 Openness to growth and change

The next section in this chapter further outlines findings regarding the amenability of a mentee to mimetic desire and includes a sub-theme of openness to growth and change. Moberg (2000) posits that focusing attention on the model in modelling effect is more likely if events in and for the learner create openness to adopt new attitudes, values and if the behaviour of the mentor-model in view is credible, framing attitudes and behaviour that seem relevant to the learner's future self.

Mentor qualities that are found to be particularly relevant to mentees is part of the story for each of the mentoring dyads and comprises critical psychological and spiritual developmental needs and concerns in relation to personal, family and work/ministry challenges (Kram, 1985). As can be seen in the following, these concerns lie behind entering a mentoring relationship in the first place, and in the choice of mentor for four dyads.

In the following extracts, Brian refers to doubts about being able to sustain his ministry about which his mentor also speaks. Brian names the experience of personal criticism '*it almost verged on bullying behaviour*', and a sense of discouragement at negative events '*a series of mistakes and accidents.*' According to Rick these are difficult experiences for his mentee-minister who prefers structure and its concomitant of planning and control: '*I think Brian's very comfortable and likes structure.*'

Another dyad began in a situation of personal crisis for Kevin who had experienced mental health issues of anxiety and depression (with a background in a traumatic event at his previous church) soon after moving location to a new church and ministry. The relationship with his mentor began as skilled pastoral support and care at a time when he was '*desperate*', '*looking for any support he could get*', and '*isolated.*'

Isolation and getting to a place of desperation for help is named as a particular challenge for Baptist ministers by field experts who were interviewed in phase three of this

research. Tina describes how *'Baptist ministers have a perception that they've never been able to talk to someone in [...] depth before. So I think there is something about loneliness for Baptist ministers, that I don't necessarily see in others.'* Sam, another field practitioner suggests that

*There's a systemic structural thing that happens in Christian ministry that people are isolated...if you're smart you will take very intentional steps to overcome that...some people don't. And that very often leads to disastrous consequences.*

Larry was also isolated before beginning mentoring, lacking feedback about how he was doing as a leader, and anxious about how he was managing in his church and family situation. Nevertheless he was wary about initiating a mentoring relationship commenting:

*I was entering voluntarily but it could also expose some things that perhaps I don't necessarily want everyone to know about. I was nervous about it and I wanted to be sure that this was the right person that God had in mind and that would be helpful and not perhaps be unhelpful. (Larry-Mentee)*

Larry wants a mentor who models authentic humanity and progress as a minister *'who would be REAL and would help me walk the journey that God's set out for us.'*

A different dynamic is presented concerning reflections on Wanda's post-formation required mentoring as part of her three-year journey towards full accreditation. Her mentor, Lynn, describes her as *'being uncertain about who she was, and uncertain about her role'* at the beginning. For Wanda, personal concerns and challenges included being criticised, boxed into a conservative situation, and trying to work out who she is as a new minister where she has previously been known in a different role. Some of this related to how to be herself and a woman minister in a culture shaped by male approaches to ministry where *'there's been a lot of resistance about women being ministers over the years. I felt free to talk with my mentor about that, because she also has experienced those kind of things.'* These factors influenced Wanda's openness to learn with and from her allocated mentor even though the mentoring was arranged as part of a training requirement: *'there was very much an openness, and I'd met my mentor before in previous situations and had thought highly of her in the way she conducted her life, in the way she conducted her role.'*

This theme of particular openness to learning and growing through entering a mentoring relationship is one in common across the dyads. Readiness to learn has been found to be important in leader identity development (Muir, 2014) and is confirmed by this study. The mentee's sense of personal disorientation or dissonance was a feature in each dyad

(Collicutt, 2015) and arose from challenges and/or crises which led to a desire to find a way through concerns and issues. One of the tasks of the mentors was to facilitate reflection and the revising of perspectives and meaning (Mayes, 2009) in the midst of this struggle. A new perspective for mentees included the possibility of a new, transformed self, one aspect of which was the glimpse of a relevant and attainable quality in their mentor-model (Sosik et al, 2013). The word 'formation' can imply growing more of what is already present but in the place of disorientation it may be that transformation is being invited (Collicutt, 2015). Theologically this is sometimes expressed as the desert way of spirituality though it has something in common with psychoanalytic emphases on needing to let go of false self and attachments (Jones, 1989). Soul-making rooted in struggle and suffering is part of a classical tradition of Christian formation and spirituality stretching back to the desert mothers and fathers and the Spanish mystics (Williams, 1990). It originates in Jesus himself as he models and teaches the need to follow him in spending, losing and giving up life for others (Mark 8.31-36). It is expressed in the theological reflections of the earliest Christians as they sought to make meaning of opposition and struggle and how this fitted in the purposes of God and the work of the Spirit to bring good out of this suffering by growing people into the image of Christ (Romans 8.18-29). Effective mentoring in the context of Christian faith, including modelling and mimetic effect, may be part of reorientation and transformation.

The story of each of these dyads reveals the presence of a felt need for seemingly missing resources or qualities resulting in an openness to growth and amenability to mimetically desiring relevant, embodied, attainable qualities in mentors. In addition to such openness to growth and change, amenability to mimetic desire also includes the sub-theme of 'creative balance of similarity and difference'.

#### 5.2.4 Creative similarity and difference

In this section the impact of the creative balance of similarity and difference upon the mentee's amenability to desire modelled qualities in their mentor are discussed. Across the dyads, perceived areas of surface similarity include relatively similar social/cultural backgrounds – white British, mentee-mentor of the same gender and within the bracket of middle-age. These surface-level similarities enable initial connections and the relationship to develop in its early stages (Ghosh, 2013). There is evidence in the studied dyads of experiential-similarity: degree-educated and having experience of being in a pastoral ministry role (Eby et al, 2013). Perceived reassuring similarities which



enabled the mentee and their mentor relationship to have enough in common to connect include areas as diverse as passion for sport ('both nuts on cricket' - Carl and Ed); commitment to certain movements and groups within the Christian and Baptist world ('New Wine' and 'Fresh Streams' respectively – Brian and Rick); having strong and wider family or church connections in common (Carl's mentor Ed knew his parents well from the time when they were in the same church together and each of them had a strong engagement with children's and youth work); Kevin's mentor Harry had been minister of the church he grew up in; married with children at a similar stage (Larry and his mentor Dave). Each of these areas provided a level of either original or continuing connection which enabled the mentoring relationship to form.

Relationship quality and a strong inter-personal connection are important as the means and mechanism by which mimetic effect occurs in mentees. At the relational level both trust and perceived similarity have a positive association with role modelling support (Ghosh, 2013). Role modelling is a relational identification process that is central to mentoring relationships (Mitchell et al, 2015). Perceived similarity is an antecedent which leads to relational identification and perceptions of the mentor as a role model (Mitchell et al, 2015). Kevin describes a commonality of focus on the community as well as theological emphasis with his mentor:

*building more links with the community is something that I see as a key part of my role in the church here. So Harry's experience of doing that has been extremely helpful...something that's chimed with me.* (Kevin-Mentee)

Harry, however, is clear that he is not the same as Kevin, and comments '*theologically - we'd both be evangelical. I'd probably be more conservative than he would be*', providing an interesting example of how the mentee's perception rather than actual similarity is important for mentoring outcomes (Mitchell et al, 2015).

A meta-analysis conducted by Eby et al (2013), however, showed little relationship between surface-similarity and the mentee's perception of instrumental and psychosocial support, and relationship quality. Neither surface nor experiential similarity have as much effect on mentee perceptions of psychosocial support as deep-level similarity which comprises attitudes, values, beliefs, personality, outlook on organizational issues, and problem-solving approach (Eby et al, 2013; Lankau, 2005). Deep-level similarities between mentees and their mentors have been shown to be a strong predictor of instrumental support, psychosocial support and relationship quality aspects of mentoring (Eby et al, 2013). In these dyads, deep-level similarity includes a shared Christian faith, and the calling to and practice of Baptist ministry. Often this shared faith and calling

included a sense of a similar understanding of the style or focus of ministry or a shared theological stance. For Carl and Ed this included children's and youth ministry. Ed speaks of getting *'his concerns as youth pastor. When he speaks to me he knows that I'm not talking from a theoretical point of view. I've done the sweating, I've done the tears, I've done the joy thing!'*

For Larry, deep similarity included a common theology and vision for church and community, spoken of as: *'the fundamental theology, the fundamental desire to reach the community, to be missional as a church, I think that is something that I would recognise in my own church and aspire to have'*

Larry added forcefully to his list of deep commonalities with Dave: *'I fundamentally LIKE the mentor.'* There are indications that similarity and liking relate positively to each other and to the positive perception of the mentees regarding their mentoring relationship (Lankau et al, 2005). In the next chapter, the 'greater than might be expected by mentees' commitment of their mentors and its impact on the mentoring relationship and modelling outcomes will be discussed. This strong commitment to friendship-like care and belief in their mentee is a further sub-theme making mentees amenable to mimetic effect potentially lessening the significance of liking and similarity in these mainly informally set up dyads. (Lankau, 2005).

Some creative areas of commonality - what might be described as similarities with edge - have already been referred to in the previous sub-theme which looked at pre-existing areas of disorientation in the mentee leading them to be open to growth and change. These areas were perceived to be of particular importance because of indications of the mentee's psychosocial need to find support and to learn within the mentoring relationship including from the modelling of their mentor. For example, gender similarity was perceived as significant for the sense of mentoring role-modelling support for Wanda (Ghosh, 2013). Wanda's response to what she and her mentor had in common was *'Both women!'* As discussed earlier and expressed in the following, negotiating the challenges of being a woman minister was a very important dynamic:

*it's understanding where women come from and I felt free to talk with my mentor about that. I could express those feelings, those concerns, those emotions that come from other people's expectations, and prejudices and so on, with her because I knew that she's pushed those boundaries.*

This outcome of shared-female gender psychosocial support for female mentees fits with the distinctive situation regarding the importance of affirming and confidence-building for women in a 'male world.' (Eby et al, 2013)

There is some evidence in the interview data that fits with the hypotheses supported in Ghosh's meta-analysis of antecedents of mentoring support (2013) that mentees in dyads with high levels of perceived similarity were more likely to receive role modelling. Larry had a concern for what it means to hold together the challenges and messiness of a growing family with church ministry, *'it helps when we're talking about how leading a church impacts on family and all of that kind of stuff'*. Larry was relieved at discovering the *'clutter of family life which was very reassuring!'*, at his mentor's home, a similarity his mentor, Dave, knew enabled his mentee to *share the pressures of family life.'* McCullough (2013) suggests perceptions of similarity and psychological identification lead to feeling an emotional or cognitive connection with and aspirations to further develop to be like a model with consequent patterning of thoughts, feelings, or actions after that person.

The importance of prior similarity on its own can, however, be over-emphasised: similarity may arise within a trusting mentoring relationship with a serendipity and spontaneity that means that coincidences of unity between mentee and mentor are discovered over time (Cox, 2005). This rapport of 'developed compatibility' is accompanied by increasing empathic authority being given away and carefully handled from mentee to mentor (Cox, 2005). Both rapport and empathy provide a relational basis for growth through mimetic effect in the mentee via the mentor's modelling of much more fully developed or different qualities. The development of rapport and empathy mean that further mimetic dynamics relating to desire for the creative difference and role modelling between mentee and mentor become important leading to mimetic effect as was found across these dyads. Attraction and perceptions of similarity are important to build the relationship. Later on, difference can increase the intensity of the learning and role modelling emerges as increasingly significant (Jones, 2013) so that dissimilarity can prove to be more developmental (Cox, 2005).

As part of thematic analysis, a storied 'before and after' picture was constructed of the change reported by each mentee and their mentor through the course of their mentoring relationship. Through this aspect of analysis it was possible to trace how mentees identified with their mentors, reproducing particular values, attitudes or behaviours. Support was found for a view of a role model as someone with whom an individual

identifies (McCullough, 2013). During interviews, each mentee was able to speak of a greater commitment and ability to sustain a positive attitude to their church and the ministry to which they were called than had been present when they started the mentoring relationship. As will be seen further in the next chapter, some of these areas of growth reflected pronounced strengths and qualities in their mentor. Movement for Carl included the ability to carefully manage and balance work-life-family-prayer in such a way as to enable and sustain long-term youth and children's ministry in the same context. For Larry, more peace and confidence about leading the church through change. For Kevin, there was a movement through some significant mental health difficulties to an increased ability to use resultant inner space to develop his ability to listen and cognitively reflect.

Creative difference is the other balancing part to similarity in this sub-theme. Areas of stretching difference between the mentee and mentor (either in whole or in degree of emphasis) modelled something creatively desirable which seems to lead to mimetic effect. The difference between mentee and mentor is particularly evident for Brian who develops a more patient, flexible, open, grounded, persevering and resilient approach to pastoral relationships which seems to derive from working with his mentor in whom these qualities are already developed. Rick describes deep-level similarities of equality and mutuality, naming being '*professional, want [ing] to serve God, want [ing] to serve people in doing that.*' Brian's mentor Rick also mentions their differences and these seem to creatively model something which Brian lacks and seeks to develop. Rick comments:

*He's very organised in his thinking, likes things to be done in certain ways. I'm a bit more free and easy. A bit more - go with the flow and not too phased that things have to be done this way. I tend to be more of a listener and more consensual and I don't mind if you do it this way or that way. I think he would be more: 'this is the way we do it!'*

Creative difference is also important for Wanda. Through her mentoring relationship there had been movement to greater confidence in her own gifts, abilities and shape of ministry, something modelled in her very different mentor: As Wanda says,

*we were quite different in personality, and character, and situation, and life stage. That brought a richness to the relationship...I felt that that was a really useful thing. I think she can be quite a radical person, and, doesn't have, concerns about, or didn't seem to have concerns about what other people might judge her...the fact that she has pushed those boundaries has encouraged me to push a few boundaries of my own.*

In this section creative similarity and difference in the interview data for these five dyads have been held together as both contributing to mentees' amenability to mimetically desiring qualities in their mentors. Mitchell et al (2015) found that role modelling

mediates the relationship between perceived similarity and organisational or professional commitment. Their findings suggest that when protégés perceive themselves as similar to their mentors they are more likely to identify with their mentors as role models and may generalise this identification to their organization and their profession. Mentees learn and grow through intentional, relationally skilled mentor-facilitated reflection upon experiences, views and personal stories. In addition, perceived deep similarities and differences with their mentor creatively contribute to amenability to mimetic desire and emulation (Jones, 2013). The resultant mimetic effect may be influenced by perceptions of similarity but will also represent the impact of creative difference between mentor and mentee.

### 5.3 Summary

In this chapter the contribution of four factors to a mentee's amenability to mimetic desire have been analysed. The first of these is admiration and inspiration elicited by the qualities in, and example of, the mentor. The second is openness to growth and change rooted in a mentee's desire to develop the values, attitudes and behaviour needed to respond to their own sense of disorientation and situational deficit. The third factor is the way in which for the mentee, deep-level similarity or relevant difference in the dyad can function creatively in generating desire for adopting or enacting a quality observed in their mentor. The fourth relates to seeing the mentor as a model and aspiring to be like him or her, though the idea of wanting to be the same has been resisted by mentees and mentors. Admiration and inspiration, openness to growth and change, and deep-level similarity and creative difference are factors which lead a mentee to be more open to mimetic desire for relevant qualities in their mentor.

Other conditions for mimetic desire are analysed and discussed in the next chapter. In preparation for this, Figure 5.1 pictures the mimetic process. A mentee (the agent) experiences and observes a value, attitude or behaviour in their mentor (the model) which they desire and then reproduce in their own way leading to growth and change via mimetic effect.

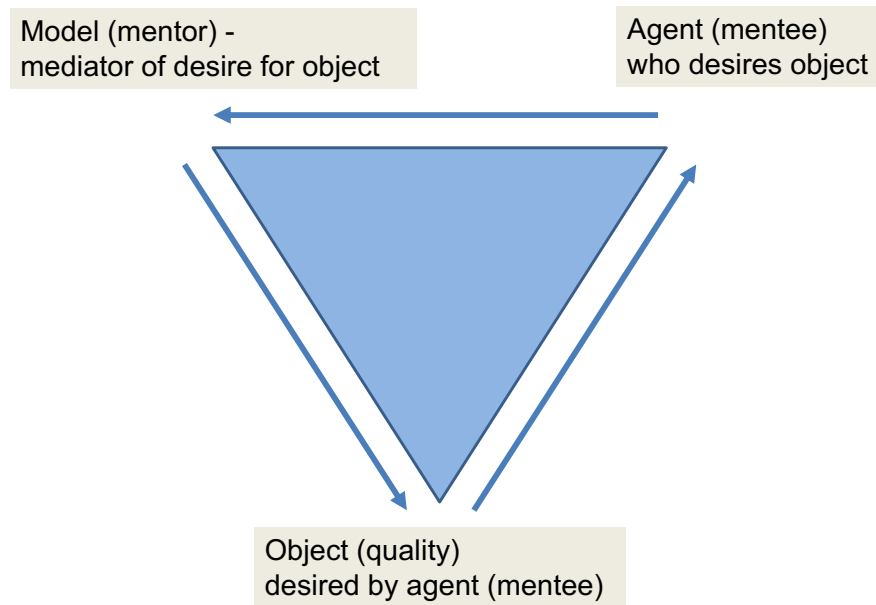


Figure 5.1 Simple model of process of mimetic effect

In the next chapter the focus will shift from demonstrating the presence of mimetic effect and factors underlying amenability to mimetic desire in the mentee to themes related to the priorities of the mentor.

## Chapter Six: Mentor priorities and a model of mimetic effect

In this chapter the focus is on mentor priorities which enhance mimetic effect. This is a third main theme found in analysing the interview data of five mentoring dyads and three field practitioners. In the previous chapter the themes of mentees' indications of mimetic effect and also amenability to desiring qualities in mentors were analysed. This chapter complements these two themes by discussing three striking factors (sub-themes) in the mentors' approach which, while not suggesting a simple mimetic mechanism (Paisley, 1994), seem to contribute to an outcome of mimetic effect. These sub-themes are things that the mentor does which, when combined, form a further cluster of significant factors influencing the dynamic of mimetic effect from a mentor to a mentee. These sub-themes are a mentor's *exceeding expected care about and belief in a mentee; real humanity and disclosure* and *prioritising of the third person in the room* (God and prayer). The final section of this chapter will draw together the findings of chapters four to six by introducing a new resonance model of mimetic effect in mentoring.

### 6.1 Exceeding expected care about and belief in mentee

This first sub-theme analyses the way in which mentees perceived that their mentor exceeds their expectations of care and belief in them. It was indicated in the interview data by the overlapping areas of availability, friendship-like care, a desire for mutuality, and strong belief by mentors in their mentees. This behaviour by mentors includes preparedness to be available beyond the mentoring meetings whether leading an event for a mentee or visiting the mentee's church or being available for consultation. From Brian's mentor Rick, this includes preaching at their church and, if there any problems, issuing *'the invitation as far as I'm concerned - any time, text me, phone me, anything'*. Carl reports a willingness by his mentor for *'feeding back between meetings'*. For Carl's mentor, Ed, such wider involvement includes *'actually being interested in what's happening in their family life is essential'*. In another dyad, contact had remained within the sessions but Larry knew that his mentor, Dave would be happy to be contacted if there was an issue that needed to be talked through. Genuine pastoral care and willingness of his mentor to be available, including during his own sabbatical, has been important to Brian who comments *'I'll say to him, I'm really sorry to bother you - cause he obviously has his own workload but he would never say, 'Well, I'm really pushed this week, I can't do a lot to support you.'*

Exceeding expectations includes praying for the mentee outside of the mentoring sessions, for Brian, *'between the meetings if something's cropped up, and he'll probably*

*check up and say "how did it go?"* confirmed by Rick who speaks of prayer in *'the unseen area - I think of him often, pray for him, his family.'* Mentees are pleased that their mentors pray for them: *'he's going to be praying that I'll be able to put into practice stuff has, has been good'* (Carl) and *'I also have that confidence that, in between the times we meet, I'm in his prayers'.* (Kevin)

Another aspect of the relational stance is a commitment to avoid even slight suggestions of hierarchy or superiority and so insisting on travelling to meet with the mentee on their patch rather than requiring them to come to the mentor's 'office'. This insistence on equality was particularly notable in Rick's values in mentoring Brian when he comments

*Rather than saying, well if you want to talk with me then you've got to come over here. I think that would be a crass thing to do. Because it would be hierarchical. I'm mentor, you're mentee. This is more about care and friendship in that qualified sense.*

Similarly, Lynn, Wanda's mentor *'wanted it to be mutual and we're in it together we've deliberately alternated the venue of the meeting, so it's - I think the guidance is that the mentee always comes to you, but we've alternated.'* Exceeding expectations also included the mentor's willingness to get to know and have some involvement in contributing to the mentee's ministry context. Brian describes this in relation to his mentor Rick: *'One of the things he did [was to] deliberately book himself an evening service to take so that he could try out and see [...] the frustrations I had.'* Vic, a field practitioner who was interviewed is aware that *'professional relationships can be blurred in a way that isn't necessarily healthy'* but his own value of openness means that giving his mobile phone number as part of his willingness to be contacted beyond the mentoring sessions demonstrates *'I'm showing trust. And I do this deliberately.'*

Boundaries in interviewees' mentoring relationships are wider or more regularly crossed than might be expected in a more formal mentoring approach or other organisational contexts (Zachary, 2012). Boundaries in Christian pastoral care and ministry are less clear than in some other professions as the early days of the relationship between Kevin and Harry, prior to it evolving into a mentoring arrangement make clear. The mentoring relationship began in a situation of pastoral crisis for Kevin. Harry, his mentor, initially met with him weekly, physically accompanied him in making certain recovery steps and also gave some pastoral support to his wife. Harry's comment explains his understanding of this availability to offer pastoral support beyond his own community and church boundary: *'As a minister I have a responsibility for others who are outside of my church and also fellow ministers.'*



A friendship-like love and care are spoken of by all the mentees as something notable in their experience of their mentor. A sense of being authentically cared for and about, including the words friendship and being loved. Kevin's idea for mentoring was informal friendship and he reported *'looking for a friend. I wasn't looking for a mentor...we've never talked about it being a formal relationship. I see it as a friendship, and we are friends.'* Harry understands the significant ways in which he is perceived by Kevin as *'a fellow companion, a friend, someone with experience, someone he can trust.'* A strong sense of friendship-like care in mentoring can be a demonstration of the qualities that might be expected of an effective mentor, for example unconditional positive regard, congruence, trustworthiness with confidences, and empathy (Clutterbuck et al, 2017). They provide effective and appreciated psychosocial friendship-like support as part of the mentoring relationship (Bozeman and Feeney, 2007).

One dyad was already founded in a prior and growing friendship. As Carl comments *'we genuinely care for one another about what's going on, you know, what's going on in ministry, what's going on in life, what's going on in family'* and Ed seeing it *'very much as peer to peer mentoring, if you want to call it mentoring. I see it just as a friendship where we have this accountability.'* There is a reluctance to characterise the mentoring relationship in a formal way with Kevin's very focused, intentional and strategic thinking mentor, Harry, stating *'I've never entered into a formal mentoring relationship with anybody. I suppose reflecting back I have mentored others, and I could probably name them. They would see it as a friendship I think.'* Discomfort shown by these Baptist ministers concerning the setting up of and running of a mentoring dyad along structured lines could lead them as mentors into a relationship where access, availability, and engagement beyond the mentoring sessions exceed normal and wise boundaries. The corollary seems to be that mentees are surprised and affected by this 'beyond boundaries' communication of care, friendship, love and availability.

Mentors and mentees did seem to prize informality and distance themselves from the term or concept of professional mentoring. Tina, one of the field practitioners who was interviewed saw these as unhelpful elements in Baptist culture which she views as representing *'a false distinction to say that either something's professional and hard and cold, or it's not professional - it's warm and caring.'* Tina goes on to comment that a professional approach is supported by *'a theological model of seeing people as created in the image of God wanting to be the best that they can be and achieving their potential.'* For Tina, mentoring includes a sense of friendship, of appropriate love and care which may exceed the mentee's expectations but are nonetheless normal parts of

how a mentor relates to mentee: *'that is what professional mentoring should do. That's all part of the package.'* Sam, a field practitioner from Australia who mentors Christian leaders across the world (including the UK), sees availability and care from the mentor as *'definitely normal'* and the suspicion of being professional as being *'so British!'* along with our preference for the word *'amateur'* and suspicion about making a charge for mentoring. Sam's comments fitted these five dyads where the mentoring was offered on a voluntary basis and potentially could be *'informal, unpaid, not terribly intentional'* whereas leadership responsibilities mean that *'the stakes are too high to have haphazard mentoring - commensurate skills are needed.'*

The fact that no payment was made to the mentors who were interviewed, though there are intrinsic rewards (Cox, 2002), may mean that voluntarily given friendship-care and believing in a mentee is even more likely to exceed expectations because paying for mentoring introduces a transactional element. This potentially affects perceptions of the genuineness of friendship-care within a mentoring relationship though depth of trust can still be present when a mentor is paid (Evans, 2018). This emphasis on 'care-love' is found in the mentoring literature (Levinson et al, 1978) and is also deeply rooted in the theological underpinnings of how Christians understand God's engagement with human beings and how, therefore pastors should behave in ministry. Unsurprisingly expectations regarding the pastoral attitudes and skills of ministers are high. All of the participants were pastors and while not every minister is gifted pastorally each one should have had formed in them and achieved basic competency (Goodliff, 2017).

Ed has clarity that there is a depth of mutual care which can be characterised as *'love at the heart of this relationship. I love him [Carl] as a brother. I sense the same from him.'* This quality of friendship is something that Ed expects to characterise all of his mentoring relationships rather than simply being true of his connection with Carl *'I think that it's a friendship for me. And we're talking specifically about my relationship with Carl here, but I come alongside quite a lot of guys and at the heart of it is friendship.'* Ed considers such friendship mentoring as an antidote to isolation as well as breathing aliveness into life and ministry by enabling a *relationship where we feel we are doing the journey with other people who get it, understand it, knows the joys, know the pain. And so, when I'm with Carl, I really know as if somebody else is sharing my experience. And that's what breathes life.*

Exceeding the expected level of friend-like care by the mentor is considered to be vital for the mentee's support and growth and also on the value attached to the mentoring relationship. Even though Kevin's mentor is in a senior church leader role, his description of him is in terms of friendship: *'I feel he's a friend...it's not, he's my boss!'*

Interestingly, Brian perceives Rick as a friend and this perception is understood but not shared by his mentor who views the relationship as part of serving God by being available to others rather than feeling a natural connection: *'I don't see him as a friend - we are different.'* Here is an example of what is experienced or perceived by a mentee as being more deeply felt and significant for them than for their mentor. It is also an example of how a mentor can embody something regular and normal for them, a particular way of caring for another person, but it be experienced as exceptional by their mentee, As Rick comments: *'You could use the word "love" but that means all sorts of things doesn't it, so I'd rather stick to 'care'. I do care for him and I think anyone in his position needs to know they're cared for.'*

Another significant aspect of this sub-theme of exceeding expected care about and belief in a mentee is found in a deep and passionate commitment by the mentor. Ed, for example, comments *'I think he knows I'm absolutely committed to him I believe in him massively. I would do whatever I could possibly do to be an encouragement to him and to his family.'* This commitment is particularly seen in the mentoring dyad of Wanda and Lynn. This mentoring relationship is characterised by friendship even though the mentor matching was allocated by Southern Counties Baptist Association as part of Wanda's post-initial formation training provision. Wanda states there *'seemed to be a spark there...there was just something there that made it possible, even though we were very different, to be friends within that relationship and beyond it.'* The exceeding of expectations included Lynn's strong support for Wanda as she affirms *'I wanted her to know that I've got her back and I'm on her side. And, you know, I did get indignant on her behalf.'* Lynn thought that her rant helped her mentee: *'And it wasn't a ploy. I wasn't playing a game - I FELT it! I felt protective towards her.'* Her mentor wasn't playing a role but being authentic in her reaction of indignation about her mentee's treatment. The emotionally charged strength of this response communicated to Wanda that her mentor *'had her back.'* As she senses that her mentor

*is for me, this person believes in me and LOVES me, even. There's a real sense of support, coming from her, that she's kind of fighting my corner in a way [...] by believing in me and giving me the tools if you like...to go back and you know try again and face up to things.*

Her mentor's strong response also helped Wanda to identify the weakness and injustice in the reactions that she had been receiving and to find a way of drawing on that appropriate anger-energy to be herself rather than simply absorb the responses. The mentor qualities of enthusiastic care and interest proved to shift Wanda from an attitude of giving-up to motivating her into channelling energy into a constructive response to a critical mind-set towards her in her church (Alred and Garvey, 2010).

This section has focused on friendship-care and belief in the mentee as a priority of mentors which exceeds expectations. It has been found that exceeding expectations in the mentees' experience of being genuinely cared about and believed in by their mentor has deepened the relational depth of connection and trust and inspired a modest reproducing of mentor attitudes and behaviour (Moberg, 2000). As one mentor put it, *'passion is caught' (Ed, Carl's mentor)*. Friendship-care and belief are qualities which theologically are expected to feature in such relationships in a Christian context: a relationship with a spiritual guide is based on genuine love, concern and engagement in the life of the other, with a view to developing, indeed imitating, the virtues observed in the accompanier, but ultimately embodied in Christ (Copan, 2010).

Perception by mentees that their mentor cared for them exceptionally can also be helpfully interpreted through exemplarity studies and literature. In Walker and Hennig's study of individuals' conceptions of moral exemplarity (Walker and Hennig, 2004) 'just', 'brave', and 'caring' exemplars, are distinct but overlapping areas of exemplar moral excellence. 'Just' includes notions of honesty, fairness and principledness (Walker and Hennig, 2004). Lynn's strong but deliberate outburst at hearing her mentee Wanda's story of mistreatment is an example of this. 'Brave' includes courage, risk-taking and lack of fear (Walker and Hennig, 2004), seen in two mentors, Lynn and Dave, and reproduced in their mentees, Wanda and Larry. 'Caring' includes loving-empathic, thoughtfulness, generous and selfless, altruistic factors (Walker and Hennig, 2004), all of which have been mentioned under the heading of this sub-theme and seen strongly in the mentoring of Ed and Rick with an impact on their mentees, Carl and Brian.

Exceeding mentee expectations experiences of affective friendship love, and of being believed in, enhance mimetic desire and can be further interpreted through the lens of character education and exemplarity. Three motivating linkages (gratitude, admiration and elevation) have been found to induce other-praising emotions and inspire people to develop and improve themselves, their behaviour and their relationships. (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). 'Gratitude' is for the thoughtfulness of a benefactor leading to a deepening

relationship and responsiveness to him or her (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). In this study, gratitude for '*what has been done for me*' lead to a desire by a mentee (Kevin) to want to offer the same sort of thoughtful and transformative care-filled mentoring that he had received from Harry to others beyond. Kevin's gratitude to his mentor overlaps with the following additional emotional responses of elevation and admiration. Affective, physical and motivational 'elevation' (Vianello et al, 2010), is a sense resulting from witnessing moral virtue of beauty of feeling uplift and an enhanced charitable outlook leading to serving others. 'Admiration' is an appreciation for a variety of excellence leading to self-improvement (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). Admiration is a foundational moral emotion facilitating detection of the worthiness of a moral exemplar and a basis for subsequent emulation (Croce et al, 2017) and has similarities to aspects of Bandura's social learning theory (1977),

Admiration and inspiration are elicited by mentee perceptions that their expectations of friendship-like-love and being believed-in are exceeded by their mentors. Mentors are perceived to show exceptional commitment to giving of themselves fully for the mentee's best interest and development living out their principles beyond the mentoring context, all in a spirit of self-sacrifice (Vianello et al, 2010). It is this self-giving and the accompanying response of elevation in the mentee which is part of an emotional process by which similar qualities may be strengthened or triggered (Vianello et al, 2010).

The importance of exceeded expectations also connects with discussion of the critical psychological concerns or gaps in each mentee's story leading to amenability to desiring that particular quality in their mentor (chapter 5). Moral exemplarity theory outlined by Kristjánsson (2006) suggests that people recognise their deficiency of a particular quality by observing someone who has that virtue, though the presence of envy suggested as a motivator in his article has not been found in this study.

Theoretical discussions and studies into the motivating effect of moral exemplarity consistently emphasise that attainable and relevant exemplars are more motivationally effective than extreme or extraordinary and out of reach ones (Han et al, 2017). These findings were the outcome of Han et al's (2017) tests of the power of exemplar stories to motivate, whereas this study concerns the power of a mentor's lived story in a mentoring relationship. The church ministry and community context and the respective progress made within these by mentees as compared to their mentors has either been relatively similar or the gap has been relatively small and so there is a perception of relevance.

The prospect of relatively small and attainable improvements rather than great moral leaps has seemed to be motivational (Vos, 2018).

The data that has been analysed in this section has found appreciation for different aspects of friendship-like love and being committed to and believed in by their mentors. There has not been a suggestion that mentees experience an unbridgeable chasm between their own attitudes, values and behaviour and those of their mentor. The opposite is true and has been important. These mentors have not been required to be exemplary in every way. Single-quality exemplarity can be attached to particular attitudes and behaviour alongside basic integrity rather than mentors needing to be moral saints who possess all the virtues (Croce, 2017). Indeed, mentees consistently have appreciated and spoken of their mentor's humanity and willingness to be vulnerable by appropriately disclosing weakness, struggle, and failure and mentors have intentionally done this: *'You can show them a page, you don't need to show the whole book'* (Harry, Kevin's mentor).

This comment on self-disclosure and vulnerability leads to a second sub-theme and aspect of mentors' priorities which enhance mimetic effect. The following discussion of the sub-theme 'real humanity and disclosure' particularly shifts the focus into the area of attainability of a modelled quality.

## 6.2 Real humanity and disclosure

There are many indications in the data that real and genuine humanity including vulnerability is important to both mentees and their mentors. Mentees spoke appreciatively about and seemed to be drawn more fully into relationship with their mentors when struggles and ordinary humanity were disclosed. Self-disclosure by mentors of feelings, beliefs, successes and failures has an effect on the relational depth through which mentees experience support (Ghosh, 2014). A sizeable part of the potential exemplar's life can be seen showing the relevance and attainability of their life as well as their pronounced and exemplary qualities (Vos, 2018). Basic mentor integrity means that there is the possibility for mentees of reflectively learning from the qualities of a known mentor-model without being put off by unhelpful values, attitudes or behaviour (Croce and Vaccarezza, 2017).

Brian speaks about how vulnerability in his mentor is important to him because he wants to feel that he is valued and has something to bring to the mentor (Ghosh, 2014). Brian speaks of needing to avoid *'the other person [...] always seen to be the "expert" [and] a*

*bit of a dependency culture that builds up that you're always going to that person and you feel that you've got nothing to offer yourself.'*

Wanda's perception that she had something to offer and was valued through her mentor appreciating and receiving from her was stated to be important: *'So she has been gracious enough to say, yes.'* This reflects her mentor, Lynn's, own experience of being challenged by Wanda's spirituality and expectations that God might give a certain sort of guidance as she comments *'She felt very specifically guided by God and to be open to a certain thing. And I found that really exciting cause I used to think that, and that re-ignited it in me.'* Here is an example of mimetic effect flowing from mentee to mentor which could be usefully included in a further study into mimetic effect in mentoring.

Self-disclosure is part of the way in which emotional connection strengthens and trust grows (Eby et al, 2013). This is seen in Rick who regards himself as open and vulnerable which fit with his values of equality and mutuality but which also encourage safety for his mentee to do the same. Rick's choice to be vulnerable was genuine and a considered choice: *'it takes a vulnerability to encourage vulnerability in someone else, so I tend to be vulnerable.'* Rick also affirmed that openness shows respect for his mentee and a willingness to trust them, with the result that relationship is deepened and the mentee is empowered:

*I tend to be open about stuff I'm facing... some of it may be personal. And I think...so he could be open with me. I think that's what the relationship should be about. It's not the professional telling the student what to do.*

Ed, Carl's mentor, has a similar approach and self-understanding, and describes choosing to disclose for the sake of mutuality, of modelling a way of relating to his mentee, and of creating safe space:

*I've never felt that I had to pretend to be stronger than I am. I've always tried to model, honesty, vulnerability in terms of our relationship. So I've had to try and share with Carl some of my own insecurities, in terms of where I am emotionally, or spiritually. And by volunteering some of that information I think it creates a safe space for Carl to share that stuff with me as well.*

Ed contrasts this with the legitimate but different approach of a psychodynamic analyst: *'offering very little of themselves. I think that for some people that could be a model that works. It couldn't for me because for me it's about friendship and for me friendship comes from vulnerability.'* All participants seemed to view self-disclosure by mentors as a strength rather than weakness (Brockbank and McGill, 2012), a help to the mentoring relationship, making a valuable contribution to the deepening of connection and mimetic

effect. It was perceived to model something in its own right as well as contributing to overall modelling effect.

The deepening of relationship includes 'believing in the other' alongside seeing some of their weaknesses and struggles. Ed sums this up in saying

*when you know that somebody believes in you when you've been honest and vulnerable, and you're not pretending to be this wonderful totally formed human being, I think there's something powerful in that.*

In relating to his mentor, Kevin comments appreciatively about on times when Harry has been open about what he has found difficult *'One of the really good things in the early days was Harry shared his struggles, and [...] that he shared that with me helped enormously.'* In this dyad, however, neither the mentee or mentor see the relationship as being mutual and the mentor takes great care about how much is disclosed. As Kevin notes *'it's not a mutual relationship...he has not bared his soul to me [...] he doesn't come and share the issues he's having.'*

Harry's mentee, Kevin, seems to have a personality type where he is emotionally led, reactive and anxious, leading with his heart. By contrast, his mentor, Harry is planned and strategic in everything he does (leads with his head) and in so doing authentically models being non-anxious and reflective. Harry is typically careful and strategic about disclosing some of his own struggles and challenges, minimising mention of his own family, though content to talk about *'ministry and life. Because, if I didn't that would become inauthentic. And I think the relationship's developed because we're honest.'*

Larry has a more deferential attitude to his mentor who leads a considerably larger church and this makes his mentor's self-disclosure very significant to him. Larry appreciates it when his mentor shares

*a bit about what's going on in his life in terms of his ministry, and that can actually be quite encouraging, because I think as a small church minister, you can think that a big church minister has things sorted or has a more special hotline to God!*

Larry had listened quite carefully for indications of his mentor's humanity commenting *'it feels essential really to know that I'm sitting across from another real human being.'* For Larry, his mentor is a looked up to person and an ordinary and real human being who embodies desirable qualities in the complexities of church and family life (Vos, 2018). Attainability and relevance are important parts of this for Larry who expresses pleasant surprise at his mentor *'being vulnerable and open'* and acknowledges a hidden hope that his mentor *'would not just have a whole list of successes that I couldn't possibly meet.'*



Larry's mentor, Dave, seems quite instinctive about sharing some of his own struggles with his mentee who he understands *'would definitely be aware of my vulnerabilities and from time to time very kindly asks about those things. I completely get that there is a line, but I think to share a bit of that is hopefully helpful.'* Dave's understanding of the importance of being real complements his mentee, Larry's, disillusionment with superficial success stories expressed in his comment:

*there's way too much in church leaders of looking like everybody's got it all together and we therefore aspire to be these together people who've got it all sorted. I think we need to know that, actually, our struggles, are very often, not unique. (Larry-Mentee)*

Alongside a naturalness about sharing his humanity, Larry's mentor, Dave, has a very high view of the way that aspiration works in a mentoring relationship and the importance of it being real people who fulfil their potential and God's calling:

*If I think the only people who can fulfil that calling, are people who've got it all together, then my aspirations are instantly dashed [be]cause I think well I could never do that. Whereas if I know that all the people in God's story, who were called by God and did remarkable things as God worked through them all had huge struggles and failings and vulnerabilities, why would we shy away from that.*

Lynn was careful in how much she shared of her own story and did so in order to communicate personal understanding of her mentee's experiences with the implication that as mentor she was a regular human being with similar struggles, as she states *'I wanted her to know that I did know what it felt like and I wanted her to see, that's not how I felt now. It is being discerning about what to share and how to share it.'* Lynn's priority was disclosing enough for it to be helpful to her mentee's developmental process. Appropriate sharing in this situation increases the possibility of discovering and experiencing similarity, relational identification and role-modelling (Mitchell et al, 2015), as Lynn comments:

*I wanted Wanda to know that I was right there with her in it and that I understood it but at the same time, that relationship was about her, primarily. Little reminders of you know, I do get it, have known similar experiences and still do from time to time. I wasn't guarded at all in terms of what makes me, me.*

In this section the real humanity and vulnerability shown and disclosed by mentors has been analysed and discussed and found to be a significant sub-theme and factor in modelling of desirable qualities. Relevance and attainability have been seen to be important but as part of a meaningful and deep connection between mentor and mentee. *'The exemplar is extraordinary but not in such a way that it is completely set apart from the ordinary'* (Vos, 2018, p.8). These mentors are thoroughly and observably human. Through disclosing real struggles and vulnerabilities as well as pronounced strengths

and qualities, mentors demonstrate existential exemplarity rather than simply being role exemplars modelling ministry tasks and so offer something of what it means to be human and to serve others (Vos, 2018).

Mentors seem to be aware of the trust-building power and demonstration of accessibility, attainability and relevance that accompany openness and vulnerability, showing not only their strengths but also their weaknesses and areas of struggle. Mentees seem to appreciate experiencing something of the real humanity that is disclosed by their mentors which is itself a desirable quality to add to others that may be desired. Rather than being embarrassed or afraid of modelling effect, mentors and mentees seem to want to work with and receive through this mimetic dynamic. In this study, minister-mentees seem to want mentors to be more than skilled facilitators enabling reflection on their professional work. In disclosing something of themselves, both pronounced qualities and weaknesses, mentors invite their mentees to reflect on their own lives and ministries as part of a process of mimetic effect.

### 6.3 Prioritising of third person in the room (God and prayer)

The Christian faith and ministry of the participants involved in this research defines more than a particular work environment or organisational boundary for this case study. Part of the occupational requirement for a minister is to enable people's spiritual needs and to foster the finding of and growth in Christian faith – all of which flows out of his or her own personal spiritual life with God (Bickerton et al, 2015). According to one understanding of Christian pastoral ministry, the role of a pastor is to keep attentive to God and to help others keep attentive to God (Peterson, 1987). This means that drawing on God is not simply one of the resources for ministry or part of the job – it is the fundamental task. It is not surprising that in discussing mentor priorities which enhance mimetic effect, a further sub-theme is the mentor's role in the mutual prioritising of God in the focus and content of the mentoring relationship.

Brian sees his mentor as fulfilling a two-in-one function which includes spiritual guidance, *'my mentor fulfils a little bit of a function in a way as a spiritual director as well.'* Some of the descriptions of what was experienced by mentees and intended by mentors who were interviewed had a soul-guide or spiritual direction emphasis reminiscent of a monastic spiritual friendship model (Western, 2012). Christian theological and practitioner literature would distinguish between the remits of helping roles like mentoring and spiritual direction in the context of Christian ministry (Lawrence, 2004). Mentoring can be seen as a reflective process focused on the whole of a person's living out and

practice of ministry covering work-life balance, sustaining spiritual life, home life as well as ministry and leadership tasks whereas spiritual direction is a relationship where an accompanier helps another explore, reflect on and grow in their relationship with God in the whole of their life context (Goodliff, 2017). It is easy to see how such confusion can occur because both functions include spiritual responsiveness within their remit. Sam, a field practitioner, was comfortable about the possible overlap with spiritual direction, coaching, supervision, pastoral care, and discipleship and prioritised one particular question: *'so, what's God doing here? And for someone who is a leader, you know obviously that's going to have a lot to do with their particular calling in leadership.'*

God is regarded as the highest authority and third person in the mentoring relationship, prayed with and trusted to guide into and enable appropriate responses. Brian's self-reported desire for spiritual direction from his mentor fits with what is modelled by his mentor as a primary focus on engaging with God: *'It's a priority of hearing from God, it's a priority of biblical study with practical application, it's about compassionate nature and the fruit of the Spirit being evidenced in his life and for his witness really.'* This is echoed in his mentor, Rick's, own reported commitment to God and an expectation of God's loving care and provision for every circumstance and the need to ask *'What's God saying in this situation?'* Ed also emphasises the priority of being attentive to God in working with his mentee Carl, expressed as being

*more interested in actually what we are as men, in terms of our relationship with God. Integrity, starts with our heart, our relationship with God, it then goes to our family, and only after that it goes on to church and stuff we're doing in terms of our role. And so it's honesty before God in terms of what we are and what we reject.*

Personal spiritual responsiveness is a major focus for mentees which is shared by and with mentors. God is an explicitly assumed third person – an accompanier and guide in the process with the question 'What is God saying?' recurrent in the process. When interviewed, Larry articulated a question regularly asked at some point in mentoring sessions with his mentor: *'So what's God saying to you in the situation? Which surprisingly is a question that doesn't get asked too often in church.'* His mentor, Dave sees this question as a focus of the process which can enable his mentee to gain perspective and encouragement by reinterpreting his initial reaction to a disappointment through reflection on

*what might God have been doing in that situation that actually, it's been really difficult for you, but was God in that you know? What about if God was actually working through you to do "this", how would that feel? (Dave-Mentor)*

The way in which God is present is understood in a variety of ways. Brian (Rick's mentee) and Lynn (Wanda's mentor) see God as being embodied in a distinctive way by a mentor. Brian sees God as equally present in and to both members of the dyad but is embodied in a distinct way in the mentor who is described as having *'some really good and helpful behaviours that he models in terms of his personal spirituality which has been helpful to me.'* In her mentoring relationship with her mentee Wanda, Lynn seeks to embody rather than constantly articulate her very strong inner sense of and conviction about God's good purposes for every person:

*I've such a strong sense of God's redemption and that nothing in the future is set. I think with Wanda, it's been possible with the pastoral situations that she's always been very good at dealing with just to reassure and remind her that there's a great goodness there.*

This is echoed in Wanda's own grasp of the meaning of God for her own freedom and development describing him as *'for me, growing me and it's ok for me to respond to God on the way that I feel God is calling me, telling me, guiding me.'* Larry's perception of the benefits of mentoring also focuses on his growth and development in Christian qualities, not only as a leader and minister: *'I think in looking for a mentor [...] I was looking for someone who would model things [...] positively in the hope that I would become more Christ-like.'*

This common understanding across each dyad of God as central and a priority in the mentor-mentee relationships of Christian leaders is a striking feature in the mentoring process. The influence of religious faith on the mentoring process here is a notable dynamic needing further research. Deep commitment to God and qualities associated with Christian faith have the potential to enhance and also provide a focus for the reproducing of particular values, attitudes and behaviour. Mimetic effect is shown to be a process based in and backed up by God as the third person in the room. Field practitioners who were interviewed considered fostering responsiveness to God as being core to the role of Christian mentoring, although with differing ways of expressing this depending upon their understanding of how God engages with human process.

For Sam this was reflected as *'identifying and promoting the work of the Holy Spirit in somebody else's life. There's really only two questions in mentoring: one is, what's God doing in your life? And what are you going to do about that?'* The focus for Sam is on how Christian leaders are growing and who are they becoming *'because, I think, that's the core of the work that God is doing in a person's life. He's actually transforming them into what he has in mind for them to be. And doing comes out of the being.'*

Tina also speaks in terms of a person becoming and fulfilling their God-given potential and contribution through mentoring as *'a dynamic intentional relationship of trust between two people, one of whom is enabling the other, to maximise the grace of God and their service in God's kingdom purposes. [...] it's very much about empowerment. To be all that God has got for them.'* Another field practitioner, Vic, sees mentoring as analogous to the hospitable, welcoming and transforming space pictured in Rublev's Icon of the Holy Trinity. Mutual engagement leads to divinely inspired insight and human growth. Vic expresses this by wondering *'is that some sort of image of what's going on, you know, the welcoming, the relationship...the social Trinity as a model of mentoring?'*

In exploring mimetic effect it has been important to me to handle the data carefully in relation to speaking of and about God leading and being at work. As a researcher with my own Christian faith and calling as a minister I have in common with participants a commitment to prioritising attentiveness to God. I am also aware of the tendency by those with Christian faith and involved in ministry to seemingly reduce human decisions, actions and experiences to the direct action of God as though there was no other process involved. Throughout this research I have been keen to implement a critical realist stance which asks questions about every factor in mimetic effect. This has meant seeking to draw on interdisciplinary insights to build explanation and being open to appropriately including rather than excluding the impact of participants' commitment to God in the analysis. In attempting to hold a non-reductionist line I have been surprised by the strength of the spiritual dynamic in mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers.

Analysis has shown that mentees and mentors speak clearly of human psychological dynamics and features involved in mentoring: modelling of certain qualities, friendship-like care. Alongside this they also take for granted that God is present and at work. The implicit assumption is that God is at work through these human processes not in spite of them or as an add-on and also that the work of God, or of the Spirit, cannot be simply deconstructed into psychological categories. This nuanced position partly explains references across the dyads to the significance of prayer within the sessions. As Ed puts it *'when we come away from one another we're just both aware: it's been good spending time together but it's been great praying together [...] we're both conscious that we're totally dependent on God moving.'*

According to Larry, formally praying within the session is only one part of being present to God, there is another human aspect of attentiveness to God through the mentor which he suggests needs to be *'more holistic, is that the right technical term? So God's got to*

*be in all of it. And that comes across when that person is listening.'* Prayerful attentiveness includes the importance of story, noticing God at work in and beyond the mentee's life and ministry, described by Dave as saying to his mentee *'you've been able to be open and God has done some stuff in what you and the church have been doing.'* Brian's mentor, Rick, uses the word resonance to describe the affect resulting from attending to the story of God at work and gaining perspective, commenting *'when someone shares with me about something that God is doing in a different situation, that may or may not be like mine but there's a kind of resonance about it, it just lifts your heart, lifts your spirit!'*

The prior narrative behind and above any contemporary story of God being at work would be the core message in the Scriptures. This relates God's calling and enabling of humanity to receive afresh their vocation to be fully human as imaged in Christ. Although variously interpreted, referencing this biblical story – whether directly or indirectly – gives a fundamental shared inspiration and shape to which qualities are considered desirable. As Brian's mentor Rick suggests *'if I've been reading scripture, if I think this has got a resonance with what we're talking [about]...he loves it.'*

The act of mentee and mentor praying and referring to the biblical story together expresses trust in and a request for God's help and strength for growth and wisdom in life and ministry. It also has a wider impact because it vocalises afresh and reinforces desirable outcomes arising from the mentoring session including attitudes, values or behaviour modelled in the mentor. Ed speaks directly about this by stating *'Sometimes those prayers, they mirror what's happened in our meeting earlier. So, what the prayer time does is just pick up on what we've just been discussing.'* Ed's mentee, Carl corroborates this in commenting *'He's going to be praying that I'll be able to put into practice stuff [which] has been good.'*

Prayer and the articulation of biblical truths are each formational (Ellis, 2004). Articulating certain phrases to and before God express and shape attitudes, values and behaviour (Kreider and Kreider, 2009). They are a reference point as to what a God-centred, Christ-imaging, Spirit-led life looks like and a way of expressing a desire for such a life and for God to enable this development and growth. The focus in these mentoring dyads on connecting with God, whether for divine assistance or guidance in life and ministry represents a personal priority for each minister. It also concurs with findings that spiritual vitality is the most valued and significant resource in motivating and sustaining clergy in their work (Bickerton et al, 2015). Christian ministerial mentoring dyads include a built-in theological knowledge of and commitment to an exemplar 'nudge' story

(Engelen et al, 2018), able to continuously inspire growth and formation akin to that envisaged in exemplarity studies that recommend use of relevant and attainable stories as part of moral education (Han et al, 2017).

In these mentoring relationships, prayer enhances mimetic effect partly by functioning as a method by which modelled desirable attitudes, values and behaviour are named, aspired to, strongly articulated and reinforced. Prayer is also understood as enhancing mimetic formation via an accompanying mentor-model through its theologically understood role as participating with the Spirit in enabling human becoming and vocation. Prayer is perceived by interviewees, and by me, as a genuine way of cooperating with and being enabled by God. Christian character (love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control), calling to and enabling for ministry, are all understood to be the work of the Spirit of God (Holy Bible, 1995, Galatians 5.20; 1 Corinthians 12).

A distinct but overlapping aspect of the way that the priority of God and prayer in these mentoring relationships can enhance mimetic effect is in relation to the previously referred to concept of adoration (Schindler et al, 2015). The shared focus on listening and responding to a person outside of the mentoring relationship, however described (God, Jesus, the Spirit), is an example of awe and reverence towards a vastly higher and greater model and the ideals that are represented (Schindler et al 2015). According to Schindler et al (2013) the effect of this shared adoration is to increase and deepen affiliative connectedness and mutual identification. In this case it binds together mentor and mentee and forms the basis of another aspect of mimetic enhancement namely a sense of similarity – commonality of values and beliefs – in a greatly valued area (Eby, 2013; Mitchell et al, 2015). Schindler et al (2015) acknowledge that in their studies they have been unable to separate out the effects of co-occurring admiration and adoration except in relation to the mediator. Admiration is for an attainable model and can lead to emulation whilst adoration is for a higher and unattainable model and leads to shared affiliation and community with others who share this reverence (Schindler, 2015). They have not been able to test this aspect of their theory with an unadmired but revered higher model (Schindler et al, 2015). Zagzebski (2017), who takes admiration as the focal point for exemplarism, also acknowledges the need for further studies into attractions to transpersonal ideals and related emotions of appreciation directed towards higher truths and entities like God. This study has not sought to test theory regarding reverence and awe, but one of Schindler et al's (2015) tentative suggestions may be

supported in that admiration and adoration feed one another in an upward spiral of affiliation and emulation.

This section has also showed mentors prioritising commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ, as a higher model and exemplar (Zagzebski, 2017). This prioritising is shared by mentees. The presence of Christ is not, however, as a lofty and removed figure but rather a storied and present one glimpsed and mimetically modelled in both mentor and mentee. New Testament theology understands the figure of and qualities of Christ as paradoxically without equal and comparison on the one hand but also as peculiarly and humbly accessible and down to earth (Holy Bible, 1995, Philippians 2.6-11). According to the apostle Paul, this same self-giving, looking to the interests of others, mind (attitude and desire) of Christ Jesus is to be in his followers (Holy Bible, 1995, Philippians 2.5).

It is relevant in this discussion to connect again to Kristjansson's (2007) Aristotelian version of the process of emulating the virtues associated with well-being in which four components of role-modelling are outlined. These are distress at a missing quality, the desire for a quality observed in another, recognition that this quality is genuinely attainable, and judgment that this quality is of moral worth (Kristkansson, 2007). In this study, mentees have been found to bring into their mentoring relationship a need and deficit in a particular area of life and ministry – affective pain at a relative lack of a desirable quality which was observed in their mentor-model and which contributed to an amenability to mimetic desire. The motivation to acquire such a quality has been found and explored variously as admiration for the mentor and a shared sense in the dyad that it is both desirable and can be pursued in relationship to God's calling. The mentoring process itself has been a vital part of gaining a reflective understanding of why and how this pronounced quality in their mentor is desirable and attainable. The actual will to reproduce this quality has emerged from a combination of admiration-induced elevation, inspiration, friendship-like accompaniment and affirmation, and a prayed/clearly vocalised, shared commitment to pursuing this quality with God's enabling.

The perception of God being present in the mentoring relationship as a third enabling, guiding and authoritative person is an aspect of mutual mimetic desire which has a significant influence on how mimesis occurs. One powerful reason why mentees in the dyad data being analysed have found qualities desired by their mentor as desirable is because at least some of them represent the imaging of 'godly' attitudes, values and behaviour.



Mimetic desire can be understood as desiring according to the desires of a mediating model (Livingston, 1992). In the previous chapter, Figure 5.1 (p.92) showed a triangular model of mimetic desire to picture this process but without any depiction of the priority and context of Christian faith. Figure 6.1 below shows a reworking of this model overlaid to show the mentoring relationship framed within the Trinitarian God of Christian faith. God is the bigger context in which the mentoring relationship and mimetic effect occur. The creator and first person of the Trinity is represented by an icon modelled after the creative life-giving hand of God famously depicted by Michaelangelo in the Sistine Chapel. This symbol is considered to be particularly appropriate for this model because the exact shape and style of this hand is referenced by Caravaggio in his depiction of Jesus and Peter creatively beckoning one of the disciples into a new life in The Call of Matthew.<sup>2</sup> The second person of the Trinity is represented in the model by the Greek letter 'Chi' ( $\chi$ ) for Christ (as the first letter of the Greek word, Christos) who is understood to be the exemplary imager of all desirable qualities. The Holy Spirit who is at work in the mentee enabling him or her to aspire to, adopt and embody a value attitude or behaviour is traditionally represented by a dove (Holy Bible, 1995, Matthew 3.16).

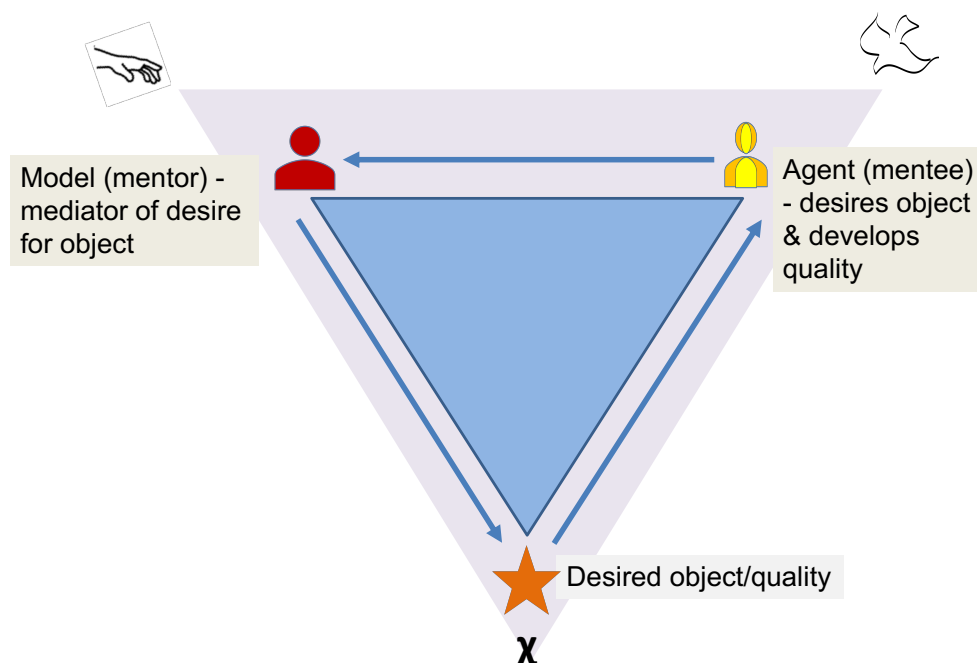


Figure 6.1 Simple model of mimetic effect in mentoring (Christian)

<sup>2</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Calling\\_of\\_St\\_Matthew\\_\(Caravaggio\)#/media/File:The\\_Calling\\_of\\_Saint\\_Matthew-Caravaggio\\_\(1599-1600\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Calling_of_St_Matthew_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:The_Calling_of_Saint_Matthew-Caravaggio_(1599-1600).jpg)

## 6.4 A Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect

In this final section a model of mimetic effect is outlined which uses a concept suggested by participants and which integrates six generative conditions found to underlie mimetic effect with other findings about the mimetic process. In this chapter and the previous one, the following six conditions have been found to underlie mimetic effect:

- Openness to growth and change by a mentee
- Deep-level similarity
- Creative difference
- A mentor exceeding expected care about and belief in mentee
- A mentor's real humanity and disclosure
- A mentor prioritising the third person in the room (God and prayer)

The concept of 'resonance' has been named and implied by some of the participants who have been interviewed. The members of one dyad described how 'their hearts were singing' as a result of their mentoring relationship, spurred on to a fresh recommitment to engage hopefully and compassionately in family, church and community. There were references to a quality in their mentor 'resonating' in the mentee. One of the outcomes for a mentee in one dyad was that she 'found her own voice'. One mentee used the word 'chimed' about a particular aspect of connection with his mentor. In the context of empathically connecting with others, Rowan Williams (2018) refers to 'attunement' as being on a wavelength and aware that there are stimuli coming into us to which, as embodied minds or intelligent bodies, we are learning to vibrate. Such attunement includes an awareness of how we resonate with and adjust to the stimuli that are coming into us as bodies, as intelligent bodies (Williams, 2018).

Responding to resonance has been found to be an important part of the dynamic of mimetic effect. This study has found that mimetic resonance is a key phenomenon in explaining mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. The following model (Figure 6.2) seeks to represent this dynamic with reference to explanatory factors and conditions based particularly around the concept of resonance. In working on this model I mentioned to my wife, a special educational needs specialist, the idea of seeing the special conditions for mimetic effect as being like sound boards<sup>3</sup> connecting mentee and mentor which carry and easily enable resonance to occur around a mentor quality. As an

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<sup>3</sup> Stringed instruments employ a soundboard. In a piano this soundboard is made up of strips or planks of wood glued together. See [https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical\\_instrument\\_guide/piano/manufacturing/](https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical_instrument_guide/piano/manufacturing/)

experienced user of resonance boards<sup>4</sup> she grasped the idea immediately and was able to enlighten me about their use and design. Resonance boards are a simple but effective perceptualizing aid made from cabinet-quality birch plywood, a minimum of 1.25x1.25 metres on a 4cm raised wood trim. Several boards can be placed together to give enough space for several people to be on and use them together. Seated or lying on the board, a child can benefit from the visual, auditory and tactile qualities as they or a partner creatively play with different sorts of objects on and with the board. Tapping, free mimicking, careful feedbacking by their communication partner around the sounds, vibrations and resonance are all part of the learning and experience.

The model in Figure 6.2 (below) represents the generative mechanism of mimetic effect. The six generative conditions for mimetic effect discussed in chapters five and six are seen as being like individual resonance boards. These generative conditions belong and act together. The generative process in the model is as follows. Special conditions in the mentoring process act like resonance boards which transmit and amplify a resonant mentor quality. Resonance conditions (boards) between mentee and mentor make possible the transmission of this sounded quality (object) from mentor to mentee.

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<sup>4</sup> For more on this see <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/remarkable-resonance-board> and <https://www.soundabout.org.uk>

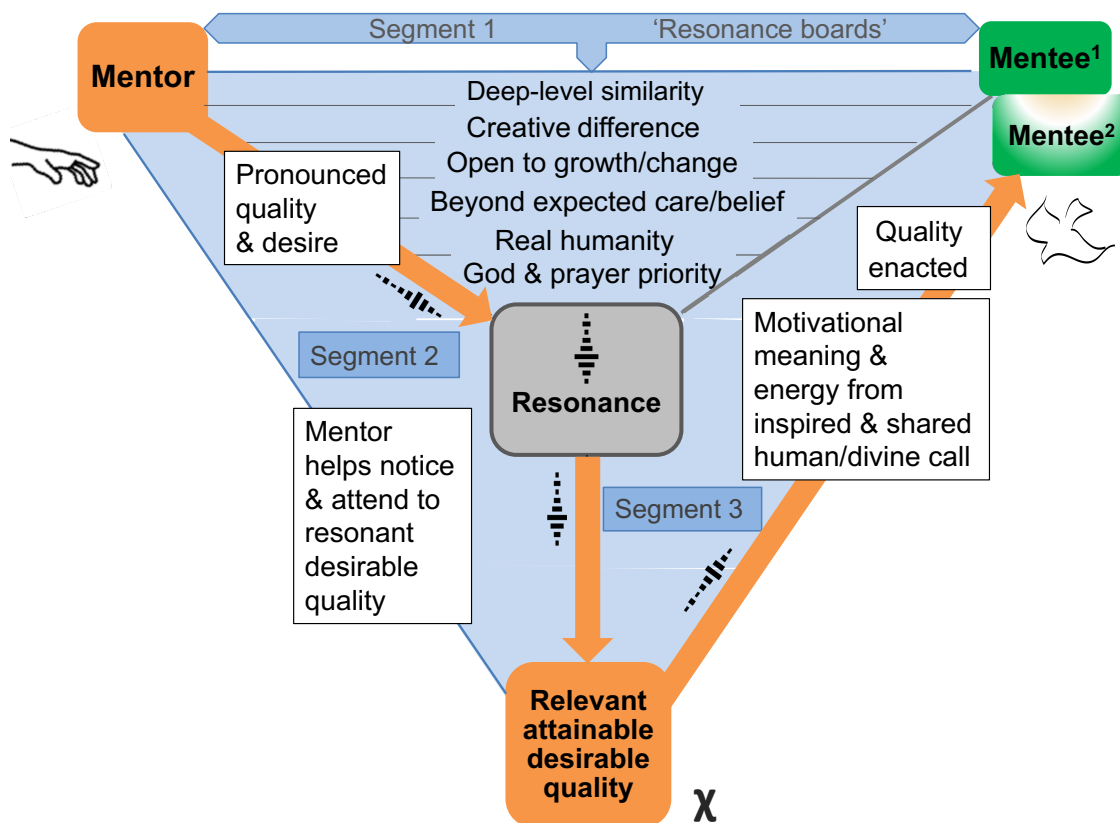


Figure 6.2 Resonance model of mimetic effect in mentoring (Christian)

This quality transmits and resonates strongly enough to attract the mentee's attention. The amount of energy located in this resonating quality chimes with or arouses a desire which fits with aspirations in the mentee for relevant and attainable values, attitudes or behaviour. As the mentor facilitates attention to and reflection on this resonant quality, motivational energy, as a generative driver in the mimetic mechanism, supports choices and progress by a mentee to enactment.

Mimetic resonance occurs in a mentee when a pronounced and attractive quality in their mentor as model and exemplar is perceived to be relevant, attainable and, therefore, desirable. In addition, mimetic resonance takes place when this quality is perceived to represent an inspirational call into their own God-beckoned human becoming as they perceive a glimpse of the exemplary Christ behind their exemplar mentor-model. In the initial part of this process, resonance leads a mentee to notice a quality which has chimed within them. An attentive mentor can work with a mentee to reflect on the value, attitude or behaviour which has resonated to determine the shape of his or her distinctive response. Time given to jointly reflecting on critical resonance leading to developmental steps (Muir, 2014) may be compared to pressing the sustain pedal on a piano.

Motivational drivers are also important factors in the generative mimetic mechanism. Continuing resonance is itself one of these drivers hence the importance of 'sustain effect' - staying with the resonating 'note' (quality). A second motivational driver is the impetus for a mentee to move towards expressing this quality for themselves through sensing it as a call to make their own distinctive and meaningful contribution to a bigger vision. In sounding this 'note' a mentee participates more widely in the vision of a bigger musical piece and concert which transcends their immediate pragmatic concerns. Motivational meaning and drive derive from this freshly inspired and shared call to enact or adopt this value attitude and/or behaviour for themselves. The process of mimetic effect occurs as movement and growth in the mentee takes place (from Mentee<sup>1</sup> to Mentee<sup>2</sup>) and results in the adoption and enacting of a new or expanded quality originally 'sounded' in or by a mentor.

Motivational drive towards mimetic enactment includes the resonance facilitated by the conditions that have been described in the mentee and mentor. A quality in the mentor continues to resonate and be experienced as desirable when it is found to be relevant to and attainable for the mentee. The actual will to reproduce this quality arises from added-in motivational energy. This motivational energy arises in part from inspirational uplift, inner expansiveness and a sense of raised and elevated vision and outlook. A quality perceived in a mentor is sensed to be relevant for a mentee as he or she seeks to fulfil God's purposes (Schindler et al, 2015). Motivation is also derived from a mentee's sense with their mentor of a clearly vocalised, shared commitment to pursuing this quality with God's enabling. This motivational meaning and energy lead to the actual will to adopt or enact a quality.

This model of the generative mechanism in mimetic effect draws together three key areas of movement within and across the dyad. The three distinct segments in the mentor-mentee-quality triangle of the model in Figure 6.2 represent movement towards mimetic effect. Segment one is the initial resonance which results from the movement across the resonance boards of a pronounced and sounded quality in the mentor. The second segment is the mentor-facilitated noticing and reflectively staying with the meaning and possibility of this resonance as signposting an attainable, relevant and desirable quality to the mentee. The third segment is the movement from seeing this quality as relevant, attainable and desirable to finding additional motivational drive to enact it. This additional motivational drive comes from a mentee's inspiration and conviction about this quality being a next and Spirit-enabled step in their call to become more fully human as they participate in God's wider purposes. The intense, shared,

faith-based understanding of and attention to the shaping of God and prayer contribute part of the motivational energy which leads to adopting and enacting a desired value, attitude or behaviour and can be understood as a third dimension in a mentoring process where shared faith assumptions, vision and goals are present (Schindler et al, 2015). The dynamic in each of these segments particularly emphasises and is founded in the mutual mentor-mentee commitment to a third revered higher person.

## 6.5. Summary

In this chapter the focus has been on mentor priorities which enhance mimetic effect. Three striking factors in the mentors' priorities, while not suggesting a simple mimetic mechanism, seem to contribute to an outcome of mimetic effect. These factors are

1. Exceeding expectations in the mentees' experience of being genuinely cared about and believed in by their mentor resulting in: deepened relational depth of connection and trust; inspiration of a modest reproducing of mentor attitudes and behaviour.
2. Real humanity and vulnerability shown and disclosed by the mentor signalling exemplar relevance and attainability and contributing to a meaningful and deep connection between mentor and mentee.
3. The priority of God and prayer. This enhances mimetic desire by functioning as a method by which modelled desirable attitudes, values and behaviour are named, aspired to, strongly articulated and reinforced through the process of prayer. On this analysis, mimetic formation via an accompanying mentor-model seems to be one way that God's Spirit enables human becoming and vocation.

The interaction of these factors with the presence of and conditions for mimetic effect and mentee amenability identified in previous chapters has been integrated into a model. This resonance model represents a generative mimetic mechanism in mentoring showing the convergence of the factors indicated in these themes. Conclusions regarding the contribution and implications of the findings captured in this model are discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusions**

In this chapter I draw together conclusions shaped by the main findings of this study into mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. A further development of the Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring is presented as a distinctive, new contribution to mentoring knowledge. The chapter provides details of contributions made to the fields of mentoring, ministerial formation and leadership studies arising from the Resonance Model. Implications for mentoring practice within and beyond Baptist ministerial formation and for progressing beyond the limitations of this study via further research are suggested. Specific suggestions are made regarding the application of this theory and model in relation to the mentoring matching process, mentors' self-disclosure and care for mentees, the need for mentor attentiveness to resonance within the mimetic process, and the contribution of transcendence convictions and values including but not limited to those of Christian faith.

The study's introduction outlined the research, its aims, the case-study context and a definition of mimetic effect. The objectives were to:

1. Critically review the literature relating to ministerial formation and mimetic effect in mentoring, psychological learning theories and practical theology.
2. Undertake primary research to identify and understand the dynamics of mimetic effect with Baptist ministers in mentoring relationships.
3. Analyse and explore emerging themes with mentoring practitioners and trainers in the field of Christian ministerial formation.
4. Evaluate the results to generate explanations concerning the dynamics and potential of mimetic effect in mentoring which have application to the development of Baptist ministers and also theoretical and practical transferability for others in the field of mentoring.

The literature review assessed the current level of understanding of mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. Mimesis has been described as a fundamental, functional mechanism in human nature and growth said to have neuro-biological and psychological underpinnings and a long history of discussion with very little research (Gallese, 2011). The literature review outlined the requirement for an interdisciplinary approach drawing from relevant studies and articles from literature on modelling in mentoring, mimetic learning, a practical theology of Baptist ministerial formation, and exemplarity. The selection of a mixed-methods case study methodology within a critical realist stance has

been explained. A description has been given of the ways in which ethical considerations and my bias and position as an 'insider' having both faith and calling in common with participants have been addressed.

Findings in this study arise from quantitative survey and qualitative interview data which are analysed in chapters four to six. Although mimetic desire as an invisible psychological phenomenon is difficult to identify, it has been detected from the mimetic effect of identifiable behaviours, attitudes, and lifestyle found in common between mentor and mentee, and distinguished from other explanations like prior similarity and identification (Mitchell 2015).

In the introduction to this study I expressed the need to understand the unresearched dynamic of mimetic effect in mentoring understood as the reproducing of values, attitudes and behaviour from a mentor to a mentee. In chapter four it was established that survey participants expressed strong agreement that their mentor had a positive impact on their attitudes and behaviour: the way they related to others, their approach to ministry tasks, their sense of God's presence, and their sense of participating in God's purposes. The survey data was found to show an association between the sets of variables of *connection with aspiration and modelling*, and *connection with positive impact on attitudes, values and behaviour*. Causal relationships were not demonstrated. This finding supports previous studies into modelling effect (Moberg, 2000; McCullough, 2013). Associations between these sets of variables have been corroborated in findings from rich qualitative data where connection between mentees and mentors has been shown to take place across six generative conditions. Generative conditions underlying mimetic effect have been found to work together in deepening connection, aspiration and modelling with a positive contribution to mentees reproducing mentor qualities.

A distinction has been made regarding processes that lead to a positive developmental impact for a mentee in mentoring. A positive mentoring impact can occur as part of the process of effective mentoring and a mentee's personal choices to grow and develop. This includes developments in the mentee of virtues, attitudes and skills. The reproducing in a mentee of freely desired values, attitudes or behaviour which are also found in his or her mentor (mimetic effect) is a particular positive impact arising from a distinct process. In chapter five it was possible to show the presence of 'positive impact' as identifiable instances of mimetic effect from mentors to mentees. This is a fundamental pre-requisite to the core aim of understanding the conditions underlying



mimetic effect and the dynamic of how they work together. This generative mimetic mechanism has been represented in a resonance model.

The study found significant themes which underlie mimetic effect and identified a dynamic between a mentor and their mentee comprising six generative conditions and two motivating drivers. Identifying and understanding the way in which these conditions and drivers combine to produce mimetic enactment has led to the development of a Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect. This model was presented in chapter six and is further developed in the next section.

### 7.1 The Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring (Transcendence)

A revised resonance model is presented in this section as a new and distinctive contribution to understanding modelling and working with mimetic effect in the field of mentoring. This revised model allows for greater analytic generalisation to mentoring in the context of shared convictions about transcendent values and goals. Transcendence is a word often used to refer to seeing or going beyond usual practical human boundaries or experience to something considered to be more significant than these (Collins English Dictionary). An increase in the prevalence of interest in and self-development in relation to spiritual interests and needs (Bachkirova, 2011) is an incentive for developing a revised model to serve contexts with broad spiritual convictions. Other contexts include mentoring where there is a shared commitment to wider goals or beliefs regarding human becoming and contributing beyond immediate personal or organisational functional and utilitarian needs (Garvey, 2017). In this study, Christian faith, practice and calling are the specific content of the more generic word transcendence. A further resonance model has been developed (Figure 7.1), however, to include the broader concept of transcendence as a deep commitment to higher beliefs and goals. In developing this transcendence model, one of the generative conditions ('resonance boards') making up the first segment of movement is changed from 'God & prayer priority' to the generic term 'transcendence goals'. In the third segment of movement the motivational descriptor is also changed. Motivational meaning and energy are now described as arising from a 'strongly shared world-view and vocational priorities' rather than an 'inspired and shared human/divine call'. These transcendence motivational drivers have power to support and propel towards what the mentee desires (Smith, 2016). We emulate what we actually love whether that be the exemplary Christ, (Herdt, 2012) or some other higher reference person or belief (Smith, 2016).

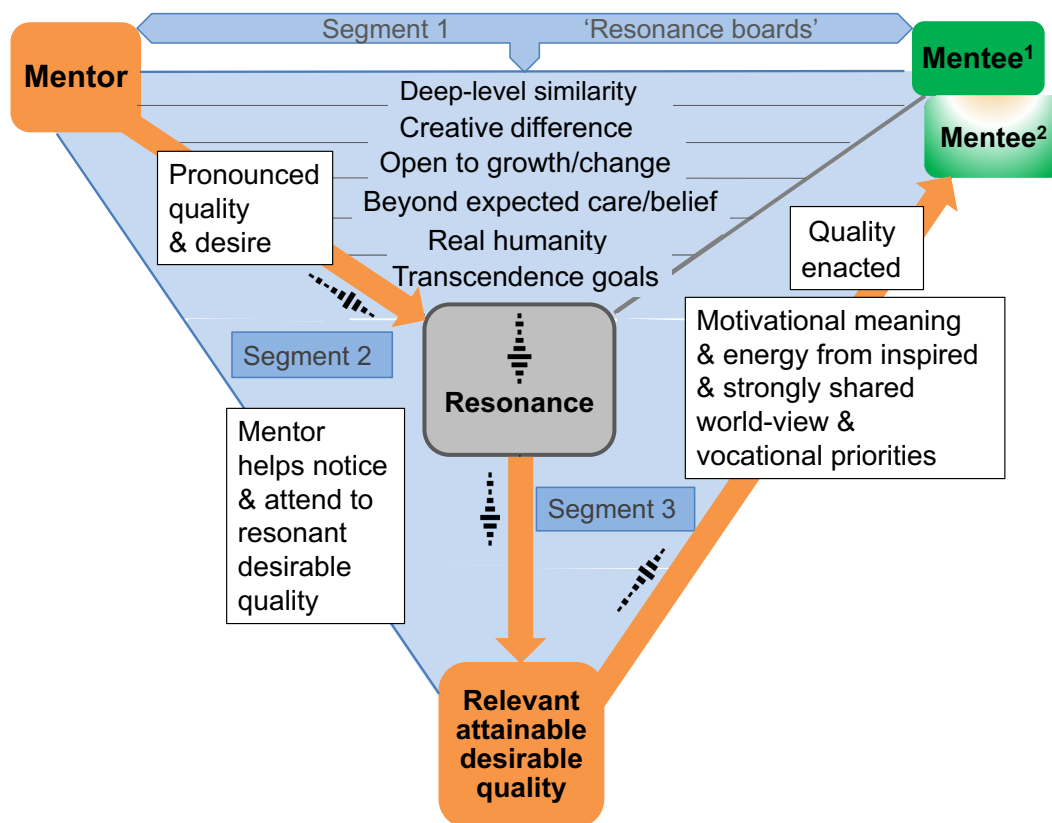


Figure 7.1 – Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring (Transcendence)

Transcendence does not require a belief in God and, therefore, this revision of the resonance model has not attempted to include the associated concept of divine immanence – God’s pervasive, near presence in human experience (Oxford Dictionaries). Immanence has a particular Christian theological understanding of the active and near presence of God. Some other religions also have concepts of God’s immanence as well as transcendence though how these are conceived differs (Hart, 2013). Immanence - the presence of God within and between the mentee and mentor, was represented in the initial resonance model (Figure 6.2) by symbols of the Trinity. The replacement of God, prayer and Trinitarian context by transcendence priorities, goals, calling and motivation is appropriate as a generic extension. It is acknowledged, however, that replacing God, prayer and the Trinitarian context with generic concepts may substantively change important generative factors in the mechanism and model as originally found and developed in this study.

This alternative resonance model is useful for increasing understanding of motivational drivers and generative conditions for mimetic effect in the context of mentees and mentors with shared transcendence goals and assumptions. A resonance model with transcendence contributes to understanding attractions to transpersonal ideals and

related emotions of appreciation directed towards higher truths and entities like God (Algoe and Haidt, 2009). As Zagzebski (2017) suggests, however, further research is needed regarding transpersonal ideals. It is suggested that this transcendence version of a resonance model is tested through further contextually relevant research.

A strongly shared set of transcendence assumptions and goals between mentee and mentor - whether of Christian faith or another faith/world-view – may seem to have the serious drawback of setting-up a cosy, unchallenged echo-chamber which prevents exposure to wider developmental possibilities. This is indeed an issue for mentoring within an agreed or pre-determined wider organisational or philosophical framework. This study has found two factors, however, which counter the potential toxicity of such a framework. Firstly, creative difference embodied in a striking quality in a mentor, rather than surface level similarity and sameness, has been noted as important in mentee amenability to desiring that value, attitude or behaviour. Secondly, transcendence assumptions and goals have the ability to stretch both mentee and mentor towards an ideal which is often beneficial to society. In the Christian context, creative difference and the invitation to reach beyond existing achieved qualities glimpsed in the mentor are embodied and represented in the self-giving, world-serving exemplar of Christ.

## 7.2 Contribution of the Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring

A major contribution of this study is the Resonance Model of Mimetic Effect in Mentoring. The Resonance Model is a new representation and theory which makes a valuable contribution to understanding and working with mimetic effect as a dynamic in the practice of mentoring. There has not previously been an explanatory model in mentoring theory for how a quality in a mentor becomes noticed, desired and adopted by their mentee. Mimetic effect is a fundamental, functional mechanism in human nature and growth (Gallese 2011), with a long history of discussion, yet there has been little research into the mechanism of mimetic learning (Kristjansson, 2017). Modelling was clearly identified as far back as Kram (1985). Although there have been some studies into the presence of modelling (Murphy and Kram, 2010; Bozeman et al, 2007) and the importance of transfer of values, beliefs and attitudes to the mentee (Bailey-McHale and Hart, 2013) there has been limited research into the dynamics. Previous accounts relied upon studies or discussions in the fields of social learning (Hoppit and Laland, 2013), mimetic learning (Warnick, 2009, Billett, 2014), leadership (Avolio et al, 2004), and exemplarity (Steinbock, 2001). These accounts are relevant to but outside of mentoring. Ministerial formation literature, with few exceptions (Copan, 2010; Click in Floding, 2011)

has assumed but not explained the process of modelling and imitation (Lewis, 2009). This explanatory, integrated, new model can enable theorists and practitioners in the areas of both mentoring and ministerial formation to understand the possibility and dynamic of mimetic effect and to consciously work with and participate in this process.

The development of the Resonance Model fulfils an objective of the study by providing an explanation concerning the dynamic of mimetic effect in mentoring. The model and explanation given in chapter six of this study arises from findings in mixed quantitative and qualitative aspects of this critical realist case-study. This account represents interpretative insights drawn from studies and discussions in the fields of mentoring, the psychology of social and mimetic learning, exemplarity and leadership studies, and a practical theology of ministerial formation. An explanation has been developed from the convergence of findings from participant data which indicate generative conditions for and motivational drivers in mimetic effect in mentoring. These have been represented in a resonance model of mimetic effect in mentoring which seeks to integrate these generative factors. Development of the Resonance Model enables wider analytic generalisation and applicability for others in the field of mentoring beyond the context of mentoring Baptist ministers.

### 7.3 Application of generative conditions for mimetic effect to mentoring

The Resonance Model outlined above expresses six generative conditions which belong and act together across a mentoring dyad. These generative, complementary conditions for mimetic resonance are brought together in this study in a fresh and distinctive way. Together they have a synergistic dynamic which enables mimetic resonance, process and effect. These are fundamental conditions for the dynamic of mimetic effect facilitating amplified resonance and the transmission of pronounced qualities from mentor to mentees. Although they do not guarantee that such effect will occur their presence has a generative and enabling effect. These conditions combine to make up the sense of connection which is associated with both aspiration and modelling and with a positive impact on mentee attitudes, values and behaviour found in the quantitative part of this study (chapter four).

#### 7.3.1 Matching and *openness to growth and change* with *creative difference*

The generative conditions of *openness to growth and change* together with *creative difference* have implications for matching in mentoring. Openness to growth and change in the mentee has been observed to particularly originate in disorientation. New or

changed circumstances for a mentee lead to a sense that necessary qualities are lacking and perceived to be needed and desirable. Disorientation and openness are rooted in a struggle or deficit of resource, experience or wisdom. Important alongside openness to growth and change is the generative condition of creative difference in the dyad. Creative difference occurs where a quality which is undeveloped or not yet present in a mentee is found in their mentor. Such creative difference is complementary because the mentor quality is circumstantially desirable for the mentee. Creative difference in the match between a mentee's felt and circumstantial need to grow and develop in a particular area of character, ministry or leadership which is already present, developed and modelled in their mentor adds to the mimetic dynamic. This creative difference for a mentee may be a totally inverse relationship where the desirable quality is seemingly completely absent in their experience. Or it may be one where the quality is in common but is latent or undeveloped in the mentee as compared with the mentor. Prior similarity and the need to invest heavily in matching to increase positive mentoring outcomes (Allen et al 2006) has not been found to be as important as the building of a relationship in which unanticipated coincidences of significant deeper items in common (Cox, 2005; Mitchell et al, 2015). This can include the serendipity of creative fit (Cox 2005) arising from disorientation and a desire to find a way through a life or ministry crisis but rooted in the reassurance of depth of connection based in more than surface similarity. The possibility of such serendipity in mentoring could lead to a devaluing of matching but the opposite strategic response is suggested. Consideration could be given to finding ways of matching with a mentor who has complementary strengths and qualities which are undeveloped in and/or circumstantially desirable for a mentee. One area where this approach has been shown to be of benefit and identified in this study is in female to female mentoring to counter some of the male oriented and dominant assumptions and pressures about what is acceptable in leadership and its expected shape.

Mimetic effect has not been shown to depend on prior similarity or matching. One type of useful matching is indicated, however, where a quality that is pragmatically desired by, but undeveloped in a mentee, is particularly present in their mentor. For those with organisational responsibility for allocating or identifying appropriate mentors, it is possible to draw on this insight in matching a mentee who it is discerned needs a particular strength or quality in their life or ministry with a mentor who models this quality. A helpful match could be made between a mentor who has found ways to relevantly grow and develop in the face of a struggle or challenge with a mentee facing a similar area. The aim would be to match a mentee with a mentor who has managed relevant, transformational growth rather than despair, denial, and rationalisation in the face of

difficulty or need (Collicutt, 2015). Reviewing the mentoring 'contract' at regular intervals could also draw on this insight about inverse matching around relevant creative difference. Courageous questions might include whether there is still creative difference between the mentor and their mentee? Or might someone new need to be found for the sake of the mentee's continuing development?

### 7.3.2 The positive contribution of self-disclosure and exemplary care by a mentor

The study has indicated a synergy about generative conditions like mentees' perception of mentors offering greater than expected care and their willing disclosure of their humanity. A gap between such exemplary care about and disclosure to mentees and normal professional standards in mentor practice should not be exaggerated. Mentees' perceptions may represent mistakenly low expectations regarding the nature of a professionally enabled mentoring relationship (Storrs et al, 2008) or of a hierarchical rather than developmental emphasis in mentoring approaches (Keller, 2010). Mentees' perceptions of receiving *beyond expected care and being believed in* has, however, functioned as exemplary behaviour which has deepened connection and engendered trust and openness to qualities in the mentor. The *real humanity* naturally and carefully disclosed by the mentor has also meant that any pronounced qualities and associated enthusiasms are experienced as relevant to and attainable by the mentee. Real humanity is itself a potentially desirable quality in a faith context where sometimes a pressure is felt to look the part of being a vital, faithful, visionary Christian minister in a particular mould (Lewis-Anthony, 2009). Going beyond expected boundaries both in terms of care and disclosure worked for mentees in deepening relationship and opening up a view of and route to attainable and relevant qualities.

Looseness around boundaries can be critiqued, however, as going beyond usual professional lines and risking the creation of dependency though indications were of staying on the side of respectful, safe, non-toxic practice (Washington, 2012). The care and disclosure that were perceived, however, can indicate the level of commitment to the mentees by their mentors and represent aspects of exemplariness in the way that the mentor engaged. An ideal mentor might be expected to be willingly helpful concerning the particular aims of the mentee, to demonstrate integrity (imitable virtue and principled action) and to show a depth of care and sharing of personal matters including life vision and worldview (Johnson et al, 2010).

These two conditions for mimetic effect of exemplary care-love and disclosure of real humanity confirm the importance in mentoring of 'ideal mentor dimensions' (Rose, 2003). The importance of these qualities in modelling effect is also corroborated by exemplarity studies showing that motivational inspiration and admiration are elicited when a model exceeds standards (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). A mentor's embodiment of a greater than expected depth of commitment to, care for and belief in the mentee, a friendship-like love, itself a pronounced quality, has a positive modelling effect. It also serves to deepen connection in a dyad. A mentor's humanity and transparency affect a mentee's perception of the relevance and attainability of their mentor's striking qualities making them more desirable. These generative conditions demonstrate ideal, exemplary characteristics in a mentor which facilitate resonance and the possibility of mimetic effect as a process in the development of a mentee.

The point of a mentor's exceptional concern and transparency is not to self-consciously create role-modelling effect but rather to act with integrity and be aware of the power of care and disclosure. Integrity is fundamental in the faith sector as in all other sectors of organisational leadership. For mimetic effect, 'Who a mentor is', is as important as their mentoring skill set. Developmental mentoring may require a greater depth of commitment to, care about, and transparency with a mentee than seems comfortable in the tightly boundaried professional helping world of which some mentoring practice is a part. Here is encouragement for the many mentors for whom integrity, investing in the development of others and altruistic aims to benefit wider society are reasons why they offer mentoring whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

### 7.3.3 Transcendence in mentoring - *deep-level similarity* and *God as the third person*

Shared transcendence convictions, values and goals are a foundation for and expression of deep level similarity as a generative condition for mimetic effect in mentoring. In the context of this study *deep level similarity* is rooted in the mentor-led but shared priority of prayerfully attending and attuning to *God as the third person* within and beyond the mentoring relationship. A shared understanding of God's purposes influences mentee-mentor conclusions about desirable qualities. These desirable qualities are jointly named, prayed for, and trusted as being brought about through the working of God's Spirit. Deep-level similarity goes beyond social or educational similarities. It is strengthened through depth of commitment and care combined with real humanity and disclosure from a mentor. It includes a sense of having challenges and concerns in common as well as a shared desire for particular qualities. Other similarities of

personality, experience and social background have seemed less important to the participants than the deep level similarity of mutual prioritising by mentor and mentee on God, *'the third person'* in the room, and on prayer. This *deep-level similarity* of shared experience and assumptions about life and ministry - deeply rooted in Christian faith and calling - has implications for the whole process of mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers. The pervasiveness of God's presence goes beyond the first stage of noticing and facilitating initial resonance. God has been the reference point for and ultimate determinant of desirable attitudes, values and behaviour. Prayer has been a means of articulating, rehearsing, reinforcing and seeking strength and help for achieving desired growth in specific qualities. Where mentees have lacked clarity about or confidence in expressing their shape and calling this has been embodied and modelled by their mentor but the implicit and explicitly assumed greater legitimate authority is God's presence within and beyond the room.

This generative condition of deep-level similarity is founded in a faith framework and transcendent vision where inspiration through the mentor and mentoring relationship rather than admiration are preferred ways of speaking. The mentee is inspired *by* an illuminating trigger object in the mentor role model and inspired *to* a higher goal for self (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). Inspiration is made up of transcendence (better and higher possibilities); evocation (spontaneous feelings of energy and pleasure) and motivation (to act out the higher possibility that has been newly glimpsed) (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). The shared focus on listening and responding to a person outside of the mentoring relationship – however described (God, Jesus, the Spirit) is an example of awe and reverence towards a vastly higher and greater model and the ideals that are represented (Schindler et al 2015). The effect of this shared referencing is to increase and deepen affiliative connectedness and mutual identification (Schindler 2013). It binds together mentor and mentee and forms the basis of another aspect of mimetic enhancement namely a sense of similarity – commonality of values and beliefs – in a greatly valued area (Eby, 2013; Mitchell et al, 2015).

There is also congruence here with some psychotherapeutic studies. These describe the desire to develop greater self-transcendence as a goal and response to a self-transcendent but also immanent God. Responding to God means attending to experience, growing in understanding of the self and world, discerning and deciding about best fit steps forward towards desired goals (Conn, 1998). A recent study found that a significant factor in helping mentoring to be effective includes deep and shared values and commitment to a greater goal beyond the mentor-mentee relationship



(Evans, 2018). For the mentoring relationships in this study, the presence of God enhances mimetic effect by functioning as a method by which modelled desirable attitudes, values and behaviour are named, aspired to, strongly articulated and reinforced through the process of prayer. Mimetic formation via an accompanying model might be said to be one of the mechanisms through which the Spirit enables human becoming and vocation.

#### 7.4 Mentor attentiveness to resonance and the mimetic process

A further implication for mentors of the Resonance Model is the need to notice, stay with and work with motivational drivers that lead mentees to adopt desired qualities. In the second segment of the Resonance Model, a mentor has the task of noticing and reflectively staying with the meaning and signposting of resonance in a mentee towards an attainable, relevant and desired quality. This requires a mentor to learn to spot and stay with resonance in their mentee when it is happening. The process includes mentor and mentee working out what the particular resonance affect might signify given that there are other sorts of 'moments' or experiences of 'presence' in mentoring and helping relationships (Senge et al, 2005; Noon, 2018). A mentor who understands the second movement in the Resonance Model will attend to and help a mentee explore resonance and his or her sense of being inspired by new, better and higher possibilities, effectively accompanied by raised feelings of energy, goodness and pleasure and motivation to act out the higher possibility that has been newly glimpsed (Thrash and Elliott, 2004). There does not always need to be an expectation of a clear marker between identifying a relevant, attainable, desirable quality and action planning because sometimes naming a preferred way of being or acting is enough.

Both self-awareness and intentionality are required by a mentor in working with a mimetic dynamic. Since resonance arises from a quality in mentors themselves it is necessary for them to be sufficiently self-aware to distinguish their own values, attitudes and behaviour from those which are genuinely desired by their mentees (Sosik and Godshalk, 2004). It will be necessary to enable mentees to explore and interpret the meaning of this resonating quality, to discern whether it is relevant, attainable and desirable and to decide whether and how it might be pursued. Mimetic effect can be taken to imply spontaneous transmission between mentors and their mentees. Occasionally this does happen and a virtue is simply 'absorbed' from an exemplar (Smith, 2016). Here, however, I am emphasising the need to intentionally make connections regarding desirable values, practice and behaviour through mentor-

facilitated critical reflection rather than relying on spontaneous contagion (Bailey-McHale and Hart, 2013). For Baptist minister-mentors, a process like the three stage mentoring process (Alred and Garvey, 2010) adapted from Egan's (1990) Skilled Helper model (explore-understand-act) can be applied to the movement in the second and third segments of the Resonance Model. The facilitation process includes high quality relational mentoring (Ragins, 2016) and is founded in values of pragmatism, competence, respect, and genuineness and the mentee's self-responsibility (Egan, 1990). These values echo the generative conditions for mimetic effect already described.

Movement for a mentee towards adopting or enacting an attainable and desired quality arises from motivational meaning and energy and is described as particularly occurring in the third segment of the Resonance Model (Figures 6.2 and 7.1). Some of the motivational energy for adopting a desirable quality comes from initial resonance as a mentee's first response to a quality which chimes in his or her mentor. This study has also found, however, that the third movement in this process involves mentees deriving motivational meaning and energy from their sense of fit with their call to human becoming and participation in God's purposes. This additional motivational energy comes from taking steps towards a valued outcome (Egan 1990) and the coinciding of core inner and outer drivers for change (Rogers, 2016). Motivation arises from a further sense of inspiration, of uplift and inner expansiveness and of raised and elevated vision and outlook, of participating in and being *called* to be part of something bigger and 'higher' (Schindler et al 2015). For mentees committed to a transcendent vision and values, seeing some of these relevantly and attainably embodied in the story of their mentor is a motivational reminder that nudges them towards this desirable quality (Engelen, 2010). This bigger, inspirationally motivational story and their place in it is echoed, re-told and rehearsed in the theology, scriptures and prayers which are assumed, voiced and referenced within the mentoring relationship (Ellis, 2004). There is a connecting and coinciding of being conformed to Christ and the imitation of a human exemplar in whom he is glimpsed (Herdt, 2012).

#### 7.5 Continuing ministerial development and mimetic effect in mentoring

Mimetic effect has been found to be a positive aspect of mentoring Baptist ministers. There is application here to the development of Baptist ministers and also to other Christian leadership. The findings of this study represent critical reflection on the process of mimetic effect in relation to the mentoring of ministers, bringing together Christian tradition, practice and other forms of theory and practice in a mutually correlative and

constructive critical dialogue which has led to new learning and insight (Swinton and Mowat, 2006). Support is found for mentoring as a significant element and benefit in the post-formation continuing ministerial development (CMD) of Baptist ministers (Baptist Union of Great Britain, 2018). BUGB have expressed an aspiration that all ministers put in place spiritually supportive, sustaining and developmental relationships once their three year Newly Accredited Minister (NAM) period and requirement for mentoring come to an end (Ignite Report, 2015). The benefits of mentoring to Baptist ministers is supported by results from this study's survey of mimetic effect in mentoring Baptist ministers as shown in chapter four. The survey showed that mentees experienced a valued connection with and aspiration to be like their mentor and model in approaches to ministry and others. The survey also indicated a high level of agreement by participants about mentoring having a positive effect on approaches to ministry, relating to others, and being aware of God's presence and purposes. Mentoring is shown to be of great value in the formation and development of Baptist ministers though just over half of survey respondents in this study arranged post-NAM mentoring.

There is some way to go in achieving a culture across BUGB where mentoring within CMD becomes a norm. Whether and how to pursue mentoring beyond the end of the probationary period is currently entirely left to individual ministers and there is no continuing requirement, covenantal or otherwise, for CMD to be undertaken. There are high expectations for Baptist ministers to fulfil a way of being which includes exemplary behaviour, growth as a disciple and which meet the high standards required by ministerial recognition rules (Ignite Report, 2015). High quality mentoring with its developmental dynamic of mimetic effect is a potentially fruitful continuing ministerial development pathway. Baptist Associations need to identify and properly train mentors who have integrity, demonstrate exemplary qualities, are relationally and empathically strong, and who are deeply committed to investing in the God-led human becoming of others. Current mentoring training in the two Associations that were surveyed in this study amounts to a one-day briefing and other top-up days. Mentoring needs to be held alongside other more usually recognised aspects of continuing spiritual ministerial formation (Mayes, 2009). It is recommended, however, that greater investment be made through more thorough training of mentors and potential supervisors. Such equipping could include introduction to the usefulness of understanding the mimetic power of generative conditions and motivational drivers within a Christian faith mentoring framework. Training could equip mentors to work with the Resonance Model outlined in this study including a consideration of the way in which mimetic effect can be understood as a process of divine-human interaction as outlined in the following section.

## 7.6 Mimetic effect as divine-human interaction

This study suggests that it is beneficial to the development of mentors and their mentees to understand and to intentionally participate in the combined human and divine process which leads to mimetic effect. The Resonance Model has been presented as a best fit though provisional way of representing how God works with human processes.

Knowledge of this model has direct relevance for those seeking to mentor or to train mentors of Christian leaders, ministers and disciples. Ignorance or dismissal of this provisional knowledge would diminish the ability of a mentor to knowingly and helpfully draw on their understanding of human processes in facilitating the development of their mentee. For mentees interested in a full account of faith and reality such reductionism would model an approach to mimetic effect in mentoring as a mystical, spiritually-enabled *only* process rather than one of human-divine interaction.

Mimetic formation via an accompanying mentor-model can be understood as the anthropological aspect of how the Spirit enables human becoming and vocation. Prayer is held to be a genuine way of cooperating with and being enabled by God from which come Christian character, calling to and enabling for ministry (Holy Bible, 1995, Galatians 5.20; 1 Corinthians 12). This is the work of the Spirit of God (Holy Bible, 1995, 1 Corinthians 12.11) but according to this study also includes human processes and cooperation. It is a positive account of growth in character, orientated toward service for the common good (Herdt, 2012). The positive, inspirational, transformative power of seeing divine qualities modelled is rooted in biblical theology concerning Christian growth as persons (Holy Bible, 1995, 1 John 3.2). Character development for a Christian includes metaphorically 'seeing' God's qualities ('glory'), glimpsing them in the 'unveiled faces' of other believers, and personally reflecting them in a divine-human process (Holy Bible, 1995, 2 Corinthians 3.18).

The way in which the process of mimetic effect draws on Christian spiritual practices like prayer and attentiveness to God needs careful consideration. The power and place of prayer can be understood in a partially deconstructed but not dismissive sense as refuelling and reforming imaginations, hearts and wills (Smith, 2016). Such vision for growth, human becoming and leadership founded in shared-faith values, experience and attitudes has been identified in this study as a source of resonant directional and motivational energy for mimetic development. The perception of God being present in the mentoring relationship as a third enabling, guiding and authoritative person has been found to be an aspect of mutual mimetic desire which has a significant influence on how

mimesis occurs in this context. The prioritising of God, partially expressed within the mentoring relationship through prayer, is a significant motivating factor in mentees moving towards a desirable value, attitude or behaviour but needs to be used by mentors with care. The manner and style of the mimetic process will be influenced by what sort of God and divine process is assumed to be present and prioritised by mentee and mentor. Mentors have the potential to influence mentees through not only what they deliberately share in the sessions but via inner convictions and enthusiasms which may not seem to be disclosed; this is for good or ill (Gortner and Dreibelbis 2007). The possibility of mimetic effect in the intimacy of a mentoring relationship reinforces the need for mentor self-reflection, supervision, and their own integrity and personal growth. Self-responsibility is necessary for mentors in the influential role of modelling to mentees (Sosik et al, 2013).

It is acknowledged, therefore, that the mimetic process is powerful and can have negative as well as positive effects. It could take place in a narrow theological or transcendence world view which dampens and rules out certain sorts of possibility or growth in mentees. The model that has been developed makes clear that references to God and praying are not optional extras or a formula which turns what is otherwise secular into Christian mentoring. As one of the participants in this study indicated, integrity, genuineness, respect and care are needed in the way that prayer and the Christian story feature in the mentoring relationship. In this way mentoring remains congruent with the mentee's needs and desires and resistant to any hint of empty pep-talking, shallow cheer-leading or, as Washington (2013) warns, toxic manipulation. For those involved in ministerial and leadership formation, knowledge of the power of mimetic effect indicates the need for self-care, continuous growth and supervision for mentors (Brockbank and McGill, 2012). Supervisors or mentors will benefit from understanding the mimetic mechanism as part of an overview of learning theories undergirding mentoring (Brockbank and McGill, 2012).

Understanding mimetic effect as a divine-human process has the capacity to strengthen the effectiveness of mentors of Baptist ministers, Christian leaders, and others of faith. This is ultimately about equipping mentors with a view to the benefits for and development of the mentees with whom they work. The BUGB Ignite Review of Ministry (2015) expressed an aspiration for ministers who display consistent character and behaviour, are equipped to work with their continuing developmental needs and are engaged in actively doing so. Identifying and equipping skilled mentors is one response to this aspiration. Such skilled mentors will understand mentoring processes including

how working with a mimetic mechanism leads to growth in character and a growing ability and wisdom for engaging with the challenges of contemporary ministry. The abilities and character of a minister are considered to be gifts and graces of God's Spirit (Holy Bible, 1995, Galatians 5.22; 1 Corinthians 12.4) but they need intentional nurture and development (Goodliff, 2010; see also Holy Bible, 1995, 2 Timothy 1.5, 6-7). This happens through the working together of the Christian community, one aspect of which is the working together of two people in an intentional mentoring relationship in which mimetic virtue – the mind of Christ – may be formed (Uffman 2014).

### 7.7 Study limitations and future research paths

There are some limitations to this study, some of which indicate potentially fruitful research paths. A large amount of data has been collected and analysed in this critical realist mixed-methods case-study approach which has been well suited to exploring the complex phenomenon of mimetic effect. Generalisation is limited given the small number of interviewees (thirteen) in the tightly bounded context of ministers in two regional Baptist associations. The resonance theory and model of mimetic effect has deliberately involved analytic generalisation for potential application in a wider context (Yin, 2014). Theory creation arises from within the boundaries of this case. This limitation has been managed by ensuring that theoretical contributions and practical recommendations have remained close to the unique Christian leadership and ministry context (Easton, 2010).

Survey participants and those selected for interview represented both organisationally required mentoring in the newly accrediting period as well as voluntarily arranged informal relationships. The number of participants available for further research meant that it was not possible to clearly separate out these two types of mentoring arrangement though the survey data indicated high levels of agreement in responses to questions relating to mimetic effect. Further research into mimetic effect could explore the formality dimension of mentoring to compare the relative dynamics and impact of informal and formal experiences and perceptions (Eby et al, 2013).

In this mixed-methods case-study a primary and fulfilled objective of the quantitative survey was to identify and purposively select participants for qualitative interviews in order to identify and explore the dynamic of mimetic effect. A secondary objective was to collect data relating to theoretically expected conditions and indicators of mimetic effect. Positive associations have been demonstrated between a sense of connection, aspiring

to be like or seeing a mentor as a model and a positive effect on ministry and participating in God's presence and purposes. The questions, however, could have been differently designed to elicit more detailed information about the actual reproducing of values attitudes and behaviour rather than using the looser term 'positive effect.' This could be achieved through designing a research instrument to closely identify specific examples of mimetic effect in mentees and to return to these participants to test the Resonance Model and pathways that have been identified. It would have helped to return to the participants to check findings.

During interviews with mentees, participants consistently reacted against a question about aspiring to be like their mentor in general ways. In trying to gather data on mimetic effect it would have been clearer to focus on mentees experience of aspiring to specific qualities in their mentor. My experience as a pastoral counsellor in offering reflective listening and empathic summaries affected the style of interviewing. At times I found myself offering or checking out interpretations of what they were saying with interviewees. This potentially prevented them from giving a fuller response to a question in their own words. Participants did, however, seem comfortable in affirming or helpfully correcting any summary of what I thought they had intimated.

There are advantages and disadvantages about being an insider-researcher (Unluer, 2012). It has been helpful to be able to understand the context of Baptist culture, the experience and assumptions of Christian faith, and the calling to be a minister. One challenge has been needing to carefully discern the considerable strength and assumptions in Christian and Baptist ministerial culture. A further disadvantage of being an insider has been that my wider, senior role in one of the Baptist Associations and being known by all but one of the participants may have affected the candour of responses though this did not seem to be a pronounced dynamic. It has been a challenge to work with overlapping relationships with mentees and mentors who, though selected using a rigorous process, were almost all known to me. This dynamic was managed during the analysis stage by staying close to the data rather than my 'other' knowledge of each mentee or mentor's pronounced qualities and their story. Having Christian faith and calling to ministry in common with the participants has enabled some aspects of trust and rapport but has also affected my decision to carefully interpret prayer and attentiveness to God as aspects of critical reality rather than constructs.

It is not suggested in this study that learning and development only happen through mimetic effect. A fundamental expectation in mentoring is that a mentor offers a

combination of experience, non-judgmental support, care, knowledge, modelling and wisdom for the development of a mentee who desires to grow in some way(s) of their own determining (Western, 2012). The relational and facilitative abilities of the mentor in enabling a high quality relationship (Ragins, 2016) and focused, skilled, goal oriented reflection, are a vital part of this (Egan, 1990). Core conditions in effective mentoring include mentors' high commitment to the development of their mentees, their ability to integrate a broader picture of wider organisational goals with their mentoring combined with strong interpersonal functioning within groups (Rogers et al, 2016). These sort of mentor qualities are reflected in some but not all of the generative conditions of the Resonance Model of mimetic effect in mentoring.

In developing the Resonance Model there is also no intention to imply that mimetic effect in mentoring follows a tidy, linear, predictable pattern, or that it be manipulated within a mentoring relationship for organisational or other goals or that it happens automatically when certain conditions and cues are in place.

Mimetic effect is not limited to situations of mentoring but there are specific dynamics within the mentoring relationship. It is acknowledged that two way mimetic effect could happen in a mentoring relationship though this has not been the focus of this study. This study has focused on mimetic effect from mentor to mentee but this dynamic could also happen the other way and would be expected to be a two-way process in peer mentoring and could be usefully researched.

The Resonance Model and accompanying explanations partially fills the gap in understanding mimetic effect in the specific context of Baptist ministers and in the wider field of mentoring. The unique nature of Baptist ministry and mentoring means that findings may not be transferable. In accordance with critical realist principles, a best-fit model has been constructed of the generative mechanism in mimetic effect in mentoring. It is acknowledged that this represents one account in developing a fuller understanding of mimetic effect and that further research is necessary. In particular it would be useful to test and refine the Resonance Model within Christian faith and other transcendence contexts.

With Zagzebski (2017), who takes admiration as the focal point for exemplarism, I acknowledge the need for further studies into attractions to transpersonal ideals and related emotions of appreciation directed towards higher truths and entities like God. The effect of faith within mentoring as well as its contribution to mimetic effect requires further



research. Reference has been made to a tentative suggestion that admiration and adoration feed one another in an upward spiral of affiliation and emulation but these theories regarding reverence and awe (Schindler et al, 2015) have been employed interpretively to understand and analyse meaning (Maxwell, 2012) rather than being tested within the study.

## 7.8 Reflections on the research process

In chapter one I acknowledged my position as a Christian and Baptist minister identified fully with the ministers among whom my research into mentoring has taken place. In the light of this position I also noted a commitment to avoid privileging faith or solely spiritual accounts of how mimesis and modelling work. My critical realist approach and finding myself through deliberate choice in a secular rather than sacred academic setting has meant that I have sought to give a full interdisciplinary account regarding the mechanism of mimetic effect. My desire to over-compensate for bias by marginalising theological accounts has been helpfully challenged by colleagues and supervisors. The positive outcome of trying to avoid bias towards a Christian faith account is that I have been genuinely surprised at the significance in mimetic effect in mentoring of a deeply shared prioritising of God, prayer and a Trinitarian vision of human call, becoming and participation in the purposes of God.

A year of suspended studies due to needing to cover for the long-term illness of a colleague meant that I lost momentum in the research process. I have personally experienced a cycle of disorientation, sense of deficit, and the desire for qualities that would enable me to reach the next stage of the research process. This has mirrored some of the story and progress described by participants. It has been inspiring and encouraging to witness the 'exemplar' members of my original Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring cohort demonstrate the possibility of completion as they successfully finished their theses.

## 7.9 Summary

This conclusion has drawn together findings about the generative conditions and factors contributing to mimetic effect in mentoring fulfilling the objective to identify and explore this dynamic. A new Resonance Model enabling the analytic generalisation of an explanation of mimetic effect in transcendence mentoring contexts has been outlined.

This Resonance Model makes a major and distinctive contribution to the field of mentoring theory and practice fulfilling the objective of adding to knowledge and understanding in the relatively unresearched area of mimetic effect in mentoring. This knowledge increases understanding in the inter-disciplinary area of mentoring practice and research and also other fields including that of ministerial formation and Christian leadership, exemplarity, and wider leadership studies. Areas for further research have been identified, some of which arise from the limitations of this study. The mechanism identified here is of interest to those involved in researching mimetic learning because mimetic effect is not limited to situations of mentoring though there are specific dynamics within the mentoring relationship.

Suggestions have been made regarding the use of this theory and model in mentoring practice. The possibility of intentional matching on the basis of complementary creative difference and as part of a process of deepening similarity is suggested. It was found that deep similarity is important because over time empathic attentive mentoring and genuine care for and belief in the mentor enable depth of connection but also the possibility of other deeper similarities to be found. In this study the priority of God and prayer is part of this deep connection making other similarities and matching less significant. There is a need for mentors to understand and be careful of the significant divine-human dynamic in mimesis as part of the conditions for and factors leading to mimetic effect in the situation of mentoring among Christians.

A mentor does not manufacture all of the generative conditions for mimetic effect described in this study but can make a significant contribution by prioritising genuine care about and belief in their mentee and a willingness to appropriately disclose qualities and vulnerabilities. Awareness of and working with the Resonance Model is an important part of respect and care for the mentee's development. A mentor can learn to be attentive to the presence and meaning of resonance, giving space for reflection and appropriate support for a desirable quality to develop into an enacted one.

All of these findings and recommendations are relevant for mentoring ministers in the Baptist Union of Great Britain as part of a commitment to strengthen continuing ministerial development. As Southern Counties Baptist Association seek to increase the uptake in and quality of mentoring among our leaders and ministers I am grateful for the possibility of contributing through this study.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Mentoring and ministerial development survey

**OXFORD  
BROOKES  
UNIVERSITY**

**Mentoring and Ministerial Development Survey January 2016**

**1. ABOUT YOU**

1. Are you male or female?

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. What is your age?

☐ 25 to 34

☐ 35 to 44

☐ 45 to 54

☐ 55 to 64

☐ 65 to 74

☐ 75 or older

3. How many years is it since you began as a Probationer/Newly Accredited Minister?

☐ 1-5 years

☐ 6-10 years

☐ 11-19 years

☐ 20+ years

4. In that time, how many mentors have you worked with in order to develop your approach to leadership and ministry? (Please include NAM Mentor/Senior Friend in this figure)

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4+

1



2. YOUR EXPERIENCE OF MENTORING

5. BUGB/ASSOCIATION ALLOCATED MENTOR RELATIONSHIP STARTED LESS THAN 5 YEARS AGO:

Please evaluate the following statements regarding your experience of the Mentor allocated to you when you began as a minister.

(For BUGB/Association mentoring/senior friend of more than 5 years ago, please go on to Question 6.)

	Disagree strongly	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
I connect with him/her as a person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I connect with his/her approach to ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I connect with the way that (s)he has facilitated our mentoring meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I aspire to be like him/her in the way that they approach ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see him/her as a positive role model	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected the way I relate to other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected the way I engage in ministry tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected my sense of God's presence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected my sense of participating in God's purposes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has not positively affected my values, attitudes or behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you currently a Newly Accredited Minister?

6. BUGB/ASSOCIATION ALLOCATED MENTORING STARTED MORE THAN 5 YEARS AGO:

Please evaluate the following statements regarding your experience of the Mentor/Senior Friend allocated to you when you began as a minister.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
I connected with him/her as a person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I connected with his/her approach to ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I connected with the way that (s)he facilitated our mentoring meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I aspired to be like him/her in the way that they approached ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At that time I saw him/her as a positive role model	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he positively affected the way I relate to other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he positively affected the way I engage in ministry tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he positively affected my sense of God's presence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he positively affected my sense of participating in God's purposes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has not positively affected my values, attitudes or behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you currently a Newly Accredited Minister?



### 7. VOLUNTARILY ARRANGED MENTOR

Please evaluate the following statements regarding your experience of a mentor that you have worked with in order to develop in your ministry since you were fully accredited.

*NOTE: If you are currently a Newly Accredited Minister please go on to Q. 8.*

*If you have chosen not to engage in any other or new mentoring arrangement since full accreditation please go on to Q. 9.*

	Disagree strongly	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
I connect with him/her as a person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I connect with his/her approach to ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I connect with the way that (s)he facilitates our mentoring meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I aspire to be like him/her in the way that they approach ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see him/her as a positive role model	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected the way I relate to other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected the way I engage in ministry tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected my sense of God's presence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has positively affected my sense of participating in God's purposes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(S)he has not positively affected my values, attitudes or behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do the answers to this question describe your experience of a current or very recent mentor (under two years since you last worked with them)?

8. Where you have chosen *not* to engage in any mentoring relationship since being fully accredited, please indicate which of the following apply? (If you have already answered Q5 ignore this question and please go on to Q9)

- ☐ I have felt no need for further mentoring
- ☐ I have attempted to identify and engage with a further mentor but have been unable to find someone suitable
- ☐ I would like to find a mentor but am unsure where to start
- ☐ A negative experience of mentoring has put me off looking for another mentor
- ☐ I engage in other types of relationship to keep me developing as a minister (please specify under 'Other' below)

Other (please specify)



3. PEOPLE WHO HAVE MENTORED YOU

9. Mentoring (whether allocated or self-chosen) has been of benefit to my development as a minister by providing

	Disagree strongly	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
a safe space to reflect on experiences of ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
'professional', technical information and advice about particular aspects of ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
encouragement and support to sustain role when things are tough-going	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
opportunity to decide about personal development goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a model of how to be a minister	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

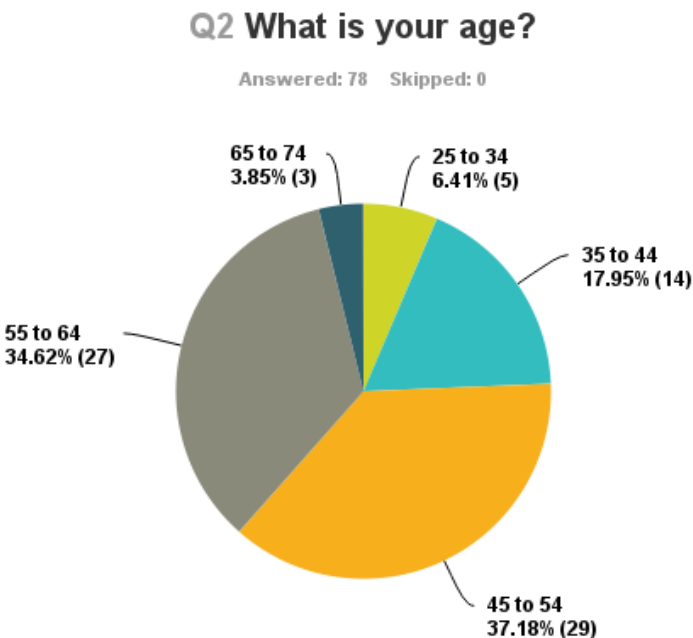
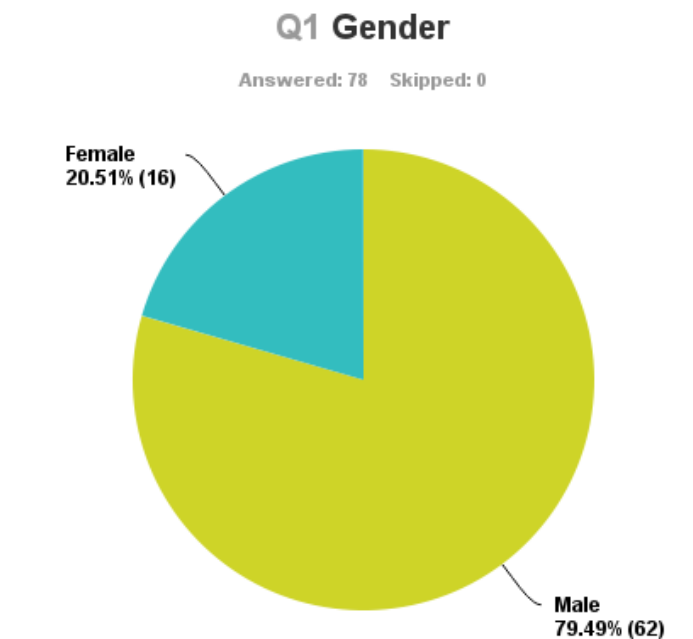
Other (please specify)

4. FINAL COMMENTS

10. What sort of mentoring provision would most help your continuing development as a minister?

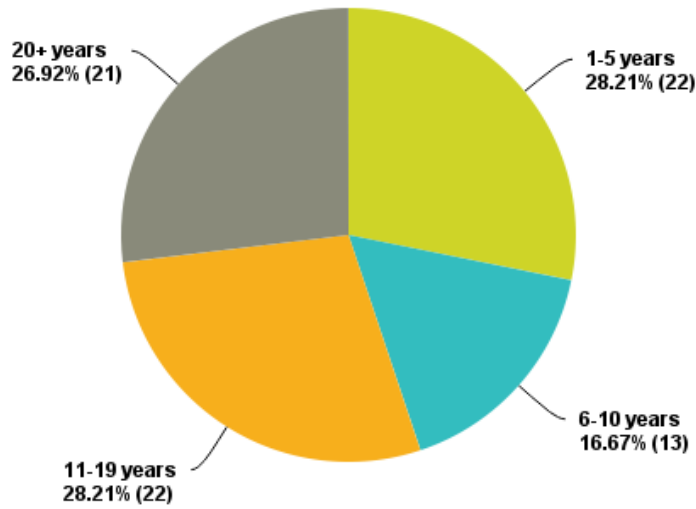
11. Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey. If you are willing to be available for an interview on your experience of mentoring, please provide the email address at which you would like to be contacted.

Appendix 2: Additional descriptive charts and tables from survey



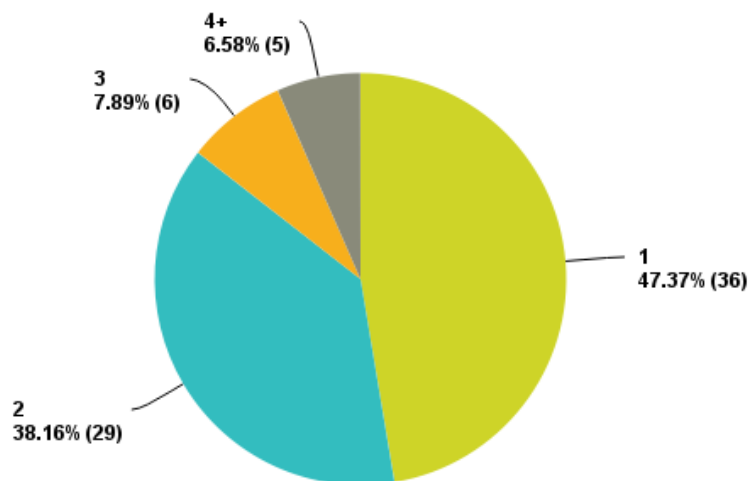
### Q3 Years Since Began Probationer/Newly Accredited Minister

Answered: 78 Skipped: 0



### Q4 How Many Mentors for Development

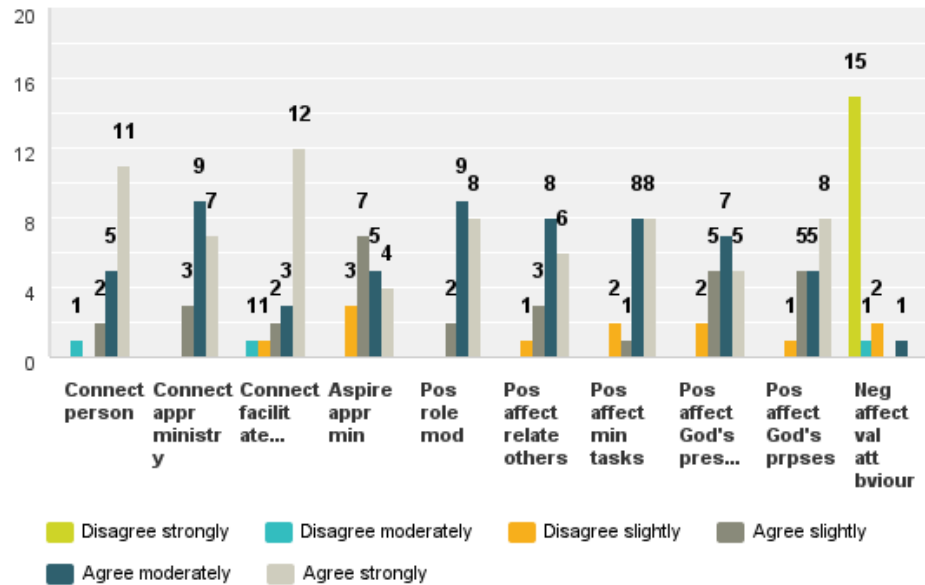
Answered: 76 Skipped: 2





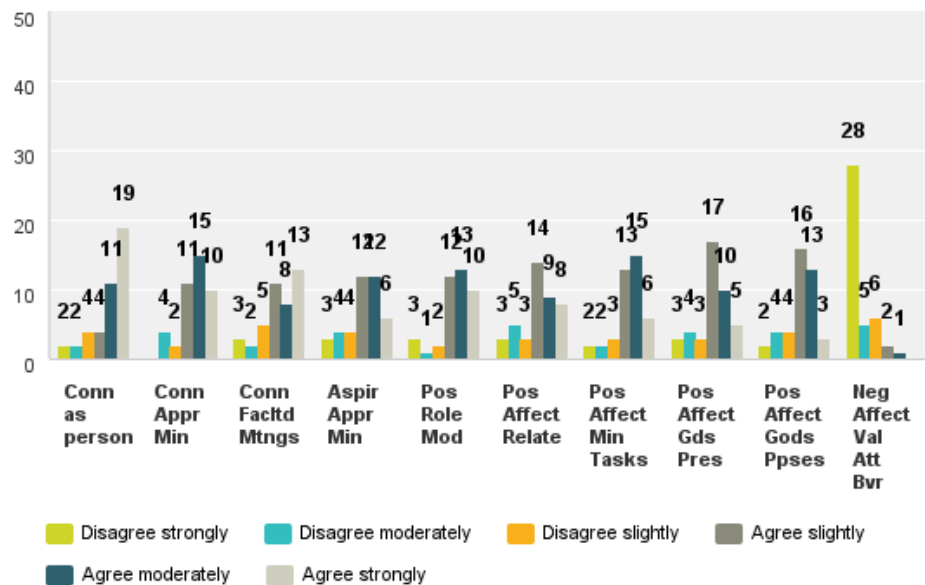
## Q5 BUGB/ASSOCIATION ALLOCATED MENTOR LESS THAN 5 YRS AGO

Answered: 19 Skipped: 59



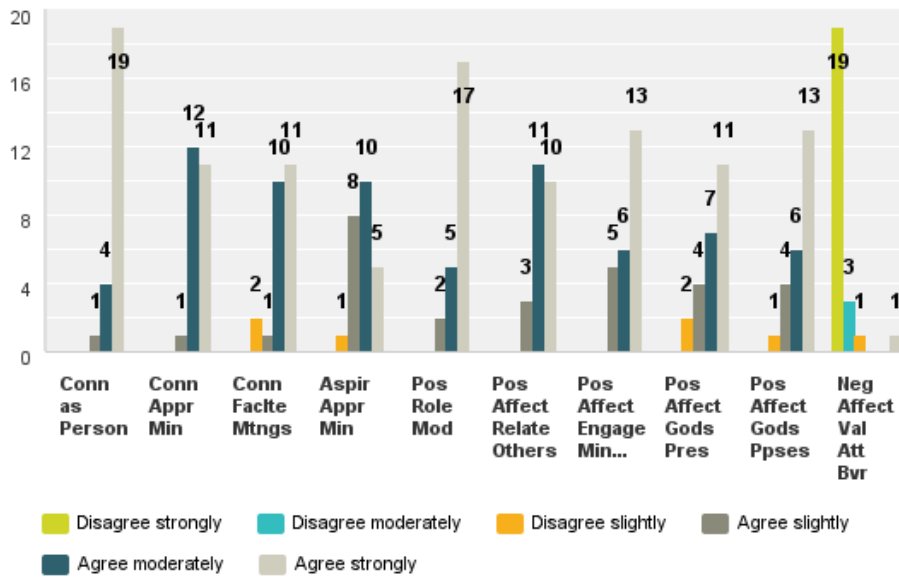
## Q6 BUGB/ASSOCIATION ALLOCATED MENTORING MORE THAN 5 YEARS

Answered: 42 Skipped: 36



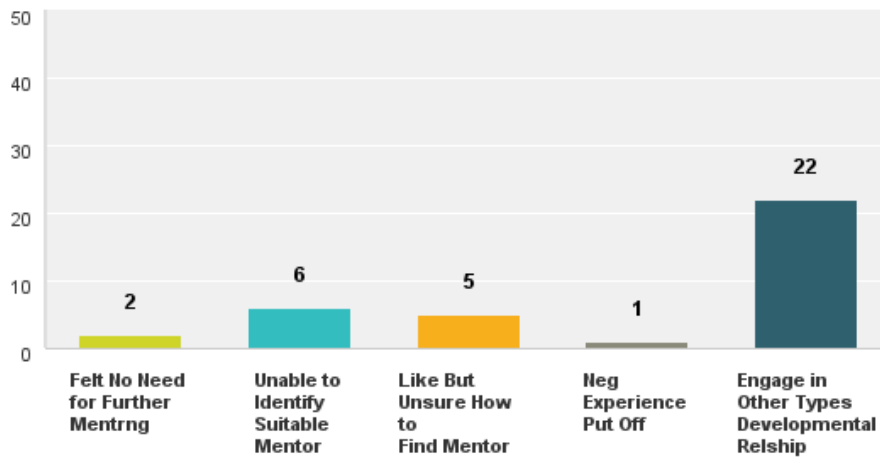
## Q7 VOLUNTARILY ARRANGED MENTOR experience

Answered: 24 Skipped: 54



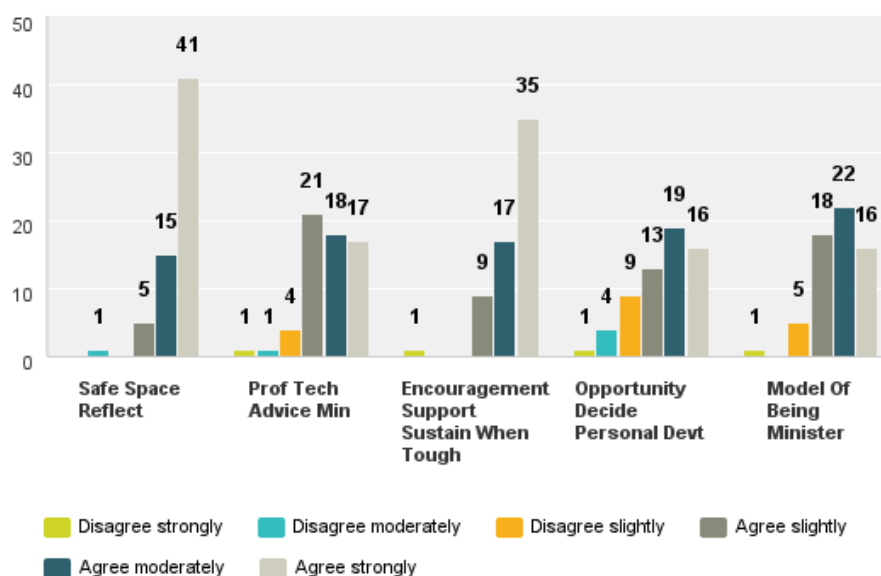
## Q8 Chosen not to engage in further mentoring

Answered: 30 Skipped: 48



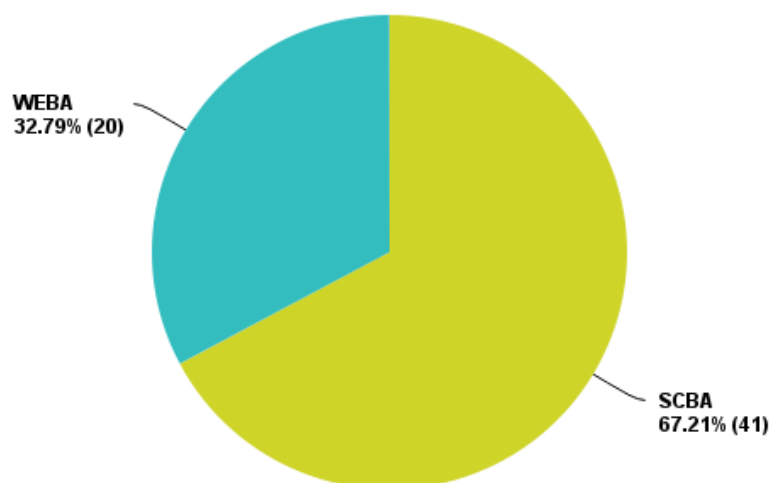
## Q9 Mentoring Benefit to Devt

Answered: 62 Skipped: 16



## Q11 Which Baptist Association are you part of?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 17



### Appendix 3: Mentee semi-structured interview questions

DCAM RESEARCH PROPOSAL (Colin Norris)  
MIMETIC EFFECT IN MENTORING BAPTIST MINISTERS  
INTERVIEW Schedule: Baptist Minister Mentees

The interviewee will be thanked and welcomed, the interview outlined, any questions about this process answered, and the consent form offered for reading and signing.

*QUESTIONS THAT DIRECTLY FOLLOW UP SURVEY RESPONSES*

In what ways do you connect with your mentor as a person?

In what ways do you connect with your mentor's approach to ministry?

In what ways do you connect with the way that (s)he facilitates your mentoring meetings?

In what ways do you aspire to be like your mentor in the way that they approach ministry?

In what ways would you describe your mentor as a role model?

In what ways has your mentor affected the way you relate to other people?

In what ways has your mentor affected the way you engage in ministry tasks?

In what ways has your mentor affected your sense of God's presence?

In what ways has your mentor affected your sense of participating in God's purposes?

*QUESTIONS THAT EXPLORE CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AND PRIORITIES*

What attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry do you sense you already had in common with your mentor before you began to meet with them?

What attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry particularly seem to have developed through relating to your mentor? OR During our conversation you have already named X Y Z attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry that seem to have developed through relating to your mentor.

Are there any others that particularly seem to have developed?

*QUESTIONS THAT EXPLORE THE INTERVIEWEES OWN EXPLANATION(S) OF CHANGES*

What has your mentor *intentionally* said or done to encourage these attitudes or priorities to develop in you?

What have you seen or experienced in your mentor that might explain the development of these attitudes or priorities?

What you have brought into the way you have related to your mentor that has encouraged the development of these attitudes and priorities?

From your perspective, what has happened between you and your mentor to encourage the development of these attitudes and priorities?

From your perspective, what other factors beyond your mentoring relationship might also have had some effect on these attitudes or priorities developing?

The interview will be closed by thanking the interviewee for their participation and reminding them that a summary report of findings will be available to them on request.

Mentee Interview Schedule C Norris 4 Apr 16

## Appendix 4: Mentor semi-structured interview questions

### DCAM RESEARCH PROPOSAL (Colin Norris) MIMETIC EFFECT IN MENTORING BAPTIST MINISTERS INTERVIEW Schedule: Baptist Minister Mentors

The interviewee will be thanked and welcomed, the interview outlined, any questions about this process answered, and the consent form offered for reading and signing.

#### *QUESTIONS THAT DIRECTLY FOLLOW UP SURVEY RESPONSES*

In what ways do you connect with your mentee as a person?

In what ways have they connected with you?

In what ways has your mentee connected with your approach to ministry?

How would you describe the values and approach undergirding the way you have facilitated your mentoring meetings?

What indications are there that your mentee aspires to be like you in the way that they approach ministry?

In what ways would you say you have been a role model to your mentee?

In what ways have you affected the way your mentee relates to other people?

In what ways have you affected the way your mentee engages in ministry tasks?

In what ways have you affected your mentee's sense of God's presence?

In what ways have you affected your mentee's sense of participating in God's purposes?

#### *QUESTIONS THAT EXPLORE CHANGES IN ATTITUDES AND PRIORITIES*

What attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry do you sense you already had in common with your mentee before you began to meet with them?

What attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry particularly seem to have developed through your mentee relating to you as their mentor? OR During our conversation you have already named X Y Z attitudes or priorities about life, faith and ministry that seem to have developed through your mentee relating to you. Are there any others that particularly seem to have developed?

#### *QUESTIONS THAT EXPLORE THE INTERVIEWEES OWN EXPLANATION(S) OF CHANGES*

What has you *intentionally* said or done to encourage these attitudes or priorities to develop in your mentee?

What attitudes or priorities present within you seem likely to have spontaneously transmitted to your mentee?

What you have brought into the way you have related as mentor that may have encouraged the development of these attitudes and priorities?

From your perspective, what has happened between you and your mentee to encourage the development of these attitudes and priorities?

From your perspective, what other factors beyond your mentoring relationship might also have had some effect on these attitudes or priorities developing in your mentee?

The interview will be closed by thanking the interviewee for their participation and reminding them that a summary report of findings will be available to them on request.

Mentor Interview Schedule C Norris 5 Jan 2016

## Appendix 5: Practitioner semi-structured interview questions

### DCAM RESEARCH (Colin Norris) - MIMETIC EFFECT IN MENTORING BAPTIST MINISTERS

#### INTERVIEW Schedule: Mentoring Practitioners

The interviewee will be thanked and welcomed, the interview outlined, any questions about this process answered, and the consent form offered for reading and signing.

#### QUESTIONS SEEKING RELEVANT CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ON MENTOR-PRACTITIONER

What is your current regular role and work?

What experience have you had of being mentored?

What experience have you had of mentoring others?

Does this include Baptist and/or other ministers?

What is your working definition of mentoring?

From your perspective what is the purpose of mentoring?

What is your particular model of or approach mentoring whether informal or formal?

How would you describe the values and approach undergirding the way you facilitate your mentoring meetings?

#### QUESTIONS SEEKING EVIDENCE OF MIMETIC EFFECT IN MENTORING EXPERIENCE

We're going to think about your own experience of being mentored:

what attitudes, enthusiasms or ways of behaving experienced in one of your mentors has also taken root in or developed in you?

From your perspective, what happened in the relationship with that mentor for this/these to take root or develop in you?

What made this particular attitude/value/way of behaving seem attractive to you?

What made this particular attitude/value/way of behaving desirable to you?

What words or images would you use to describe your relationship with that mentor?

What for you was the process by which one of his/her attitudes/values/behaviours also developed in you?

We're going to think about your experience of mentoring others: Can you think of mentoring relationship where one or more of your attitudes, enthusiasms or ways of behaving also came through or developed in your mentee?

What for you was the process by which one of your attitudes/values/ways of behaving also developed in her/him?

From your perspective what did you do, if anything, to produce this effect?

How would you explain this effect?

What words or images would you use to describe the relationship between you and this mentee?

From your perspective, what elements contribute significantly to the dynamic of a mentee reproducing some of their mentor's attitudes, values or ways of behaving?

#### EXPLORING DYAD INTERVIEW INDICATORS OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO MIMETIC EFFECT

*Wide basis for Trust*

*Mentee Openness (including struggle and need)*

*Mentee Desire to Grow*

*Mentor Expectation of Growth*

*Level of Exposure to Mentor's attitudes/values/ways of behaving (their story)*

*Informal style of relating which plays down a professional or formal approach to mentoring*

*Experiencing care, 'love', generosity, self-giving from mentor*

*which seems to go beyond a 'mere' professional approach.*

*Shared experience of faith in God and commitment to God's individual and wider purposes*

Mentoring Practitioner Perspective Interview Outline C Norris 24 Aug 2016

*Screenshot of coding process using Quirkos software from 8.6.18*

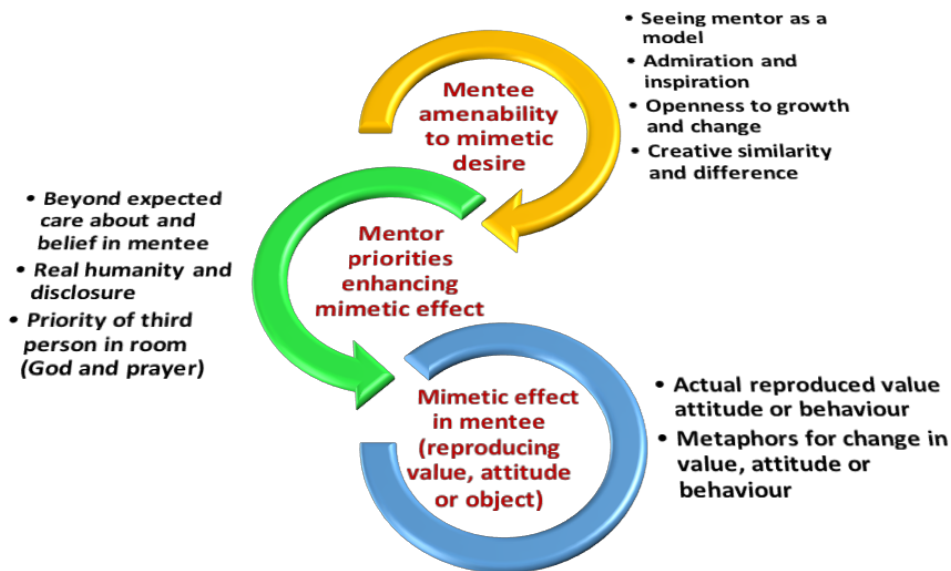




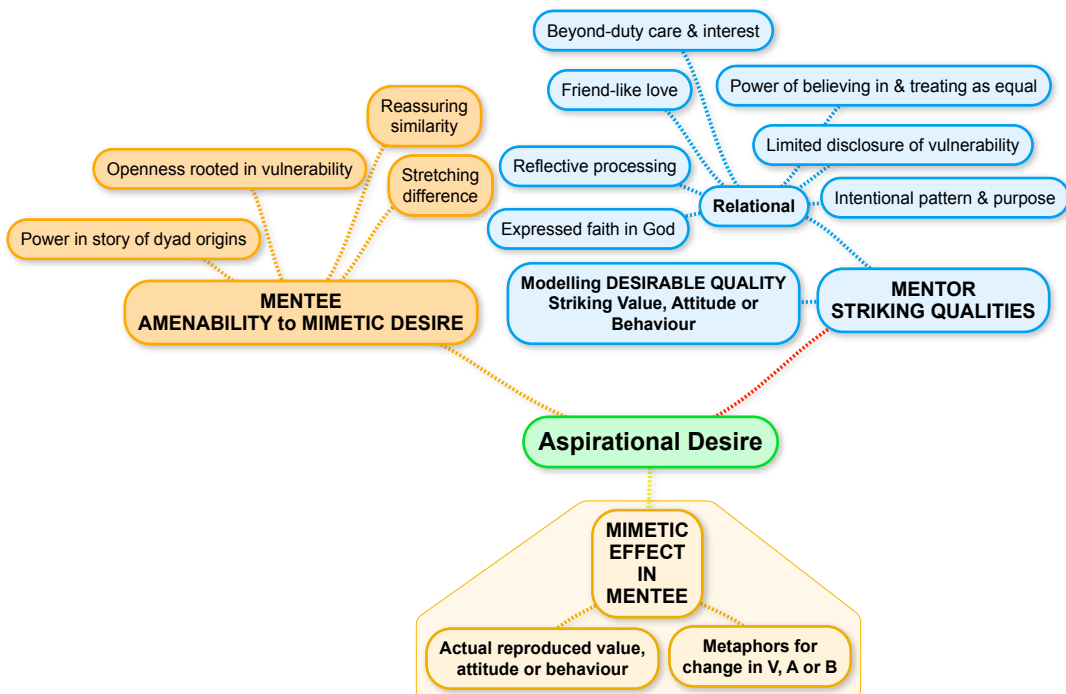








Thematic map (work in progress) 3.6.18



Dynamic of interaction of mimetic themes (work in progress) 1.7.18